Minutes of Evidence
of the
Commission on Horse
Breeding, Ireland,
1897.

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COMMISSION ON HORSE BREEDING, IRELAND.

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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE THE

COMMISSIONERS

APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE HORSE BREEDING INDUSTRY IN IRELAND.

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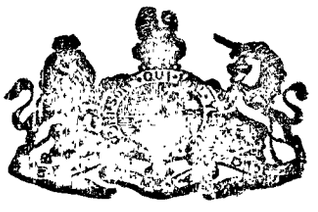
WITH APPENDICES.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



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1897.

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COMMISSION ON HORSE BREEDING.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FIRST DAY.—TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20TH, 1886.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD RATHDONNELL, LORD ASHTOWN, SIR WALTER GILBEY, SIR THOMAS ESMONDE, M.P., HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, MESSRS. J. L. CAREW, M.P., F. S. WRENCH, and PERCY LA TOUCHE.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary, was in attendance.

Mr. WILLIAM LAWSON MICKS was called and examined by the Chairman.

1. You are the Secretary of the Congested Districts Board, Mr. Micks?—Yes, my lord.

2. How long have you occupied that position?—Since the Board was established on the 5th of August, 1891.

3. What are the matters which come under the operation of the Board—was it instituted amongst other things to improve the breed of horses?—Yes. They were authorised by the Act of 1891, establishing them, to take such steps as they might think proper for the breeding of live stock, &c., in congested districts.

4. That is the authority you act under?—Yes.

5. You have that authority ever since the Board was instituted?—That was the Act which formed the Board, and which gave that authority amongst others to the Board.

6. Can you point out the geographical positions of the congested districts?—They are shown on this map, my lord (pointing to map.) They extend over this area. They fringe on the north-west, west, and south-west coasts. The area is one-seventh to one-eighth of the whole of Ireland.

7. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—That portion marked blue is congested?—Yes.

The CHAIRMAN.—What is the proportion to the area of the whole of Ireland?—The congested districts comprise 3,608,000 acres, the area of the whole of Ireland being 20,820,000 acres—that would be one-sixth or one-seventh of the whole of Ireland. The population of the congested districts is 549,000, and the population of the whole of Ireland, according to the census of 1891, is 4,704,000—that would be one-eighth to one-ninth of the population of the whole country.

9. Tell us how a district is created a congested district?—The test, roughly speaking, was that a district was considered to be congested whenever in certain counties the valuation was thirty shillings or less per head of the population. It is determined automatically by the ratio between the population and the valuation.

10. I suppose it changes from time to time?—It was taken as it then stood.

11. Were any districts afterwards added?—Power was given to the Board to include other districts if they thought fit, and also to strike out any districts they thought fit. That power, however, was only given for a limited period—one year—and after that no change could be made without legislation.

12. Were any districts taken out or additional districts added?—Quite a few; one or two were struck out, the town of Listowel for instance. A few districts were added, about fifteen, but not more.

13. Practically then we may look upon this map as correct?—Oh, the map shows the congested districts as they now stand and is absolutely correct.

14. Can you give the Commission any statistics on the subject of horse breeding in the congested districts?—The number of horses in congested districts I can give.

15. What do you mean by "horses"?—I classify them.

16. Well?—The total number of horses in the congested districts is 45,809.

17. When were these statistics made out?—The present year. They don't vary materially, but they do to a small extent. There are 45,809 horses altogether at present in the congested districts. Of those, under one year there are 6,677; between one year old and under two there are 4,568; of the horses two years old there are in the first place kept for agriculture 33,024, for traffic and manufacture———

18. You are speaking now of three-year-olds?—I am speaking of two and over; as soon as they reach a serviceable age. For agriculture there are 33,024, for traffic and manufacture 980, and for amusement and recreation 560.

19. Those are the figures for the congested districts?—Yes, but if you wish it I can give you the figures for the whole of Ireland.

20. Are those all the figures for the congested districts?—I can give them in any detail you like.

21. I want to know what you propose to do—are you going to give us the same for the whole of Ireland?—Yes, to show a comparison. As against 45,809 in the congested districts the total in all Ireland is 629,000.

22. From what date are these figures taken?—Somewhere in the spring of the year—I fancy before foaling.

23. No particular date?—Before foaling; before May, early in the spring of this year, I should say.

24. Well?—In the whole of Ireland there are 629,439.

25. Mr. J. L. CAREW.—Is that inclusive of the congested districts?—Yes. The congested districts would be one-fifteenth of that number. The horses under one year in all Ireland number 73,449, one year

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Mr. W. L. Micks.

and under two 91,384. Of the horses two years old and over 388,487 are used for agricultural purposes, for traffic and manufacture 45,583, and for amusement and recreation 30,536. For agricultural purposes there are 33,000 in the congested districts, 338,000 in other parts of Ireland; that is about one-twelfth of such horses of Ireland in congested districts, and, taking it according to area (there are 3,608,000 acres in the congested districts; half of which is waste and unprofitable land), and having regard to this waste and unprofitable land there are proportionately as many horses in congested districts as in other parts of Ireland, if not more.

26. CHAIRMAN.—What is the proportion as regards the various uses to which horses are put?—I do not quite understand.

27. If you compare horses used for agriculture in the congested districts with those similarly employed in other parts of Ireland what is the proportion?—One-twelfth.

28. And how would it be as regards those used for recreation?—That would be about one-sixtieth.

29. And for manufacture and traffic?—About one-forty-fifth.

30. Where do these returns for all Ireland come from?—They are collected for the Agricultural Statistics of Ireland by the Constabulary officers for the Registrar-General.

31. Have you any other figures?—No other statistics, my lord.

32. I suppose you are not in a position to give us any information as to the character and nature of the horses in the congested districts?—Only from my own observation—I know nothing personally of horses. I know the size of the animals and the general appearance of them.

33. Well, perhaps, you would give us what you can in that direction?—They vary a good deal. In the extreme north district——

34. Mr. CAREW.—Of Donegal?—Yes; in the northern part, Innishowen, heavy horses—heavy, hairy-legged horses from Clydesdale sires are often met with; then lower down—Glenties and Dunfanaghy districts—they are more of the pony class, thin, lean, light, and the same applies to the rest of West Donegal. In West Mayo, on the sea-coast, many are very small, poor, thin, little ponies; and also in Erris and Belmullet (indicating on map.) Then in Achill the ponies are of a better class, better shaped and stronger ponies. Then in this inland district (indicating) there are not so many horses; the people there use donkeys more than horses. I can give you the exact numbers.

35. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What do you call that district?—East Mayo about Swinford; it takes in a little bit of Roscommon and Castlerea; this is the Leitrim district. In this part of Mayo—South Mayo (indicating)—Louisburgh, there are rather good ponies, and there you have the Connemara ponies here; then down here in Cork (indicating) the horses are distinctly better than in Mayo and Donegal, larger, stronger and better, still they are lean enough.

36. The CHAIRMAN.—Most of them are small?—Small as compared with the ordinary horse.

37. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—And not of an agricultural breed like the northern ones?—No, but I fancy they are good enough for agriculture.

38. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—These heavy horses in the north, are they used in the locality?—They are.

39. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Is not the soil down here in Cork very much the same as up there (indicating)?—The climate is milder.

40. Is the soil different?—It looks better; the extreme northern part of it is much better land than any other congested part of West Donegal.

41. Lord ASHTOWN.—Is it better?—I am sure they get far more crops out of it.

42. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—In these farms in the congested districts can they use these heavy horses?—Yes, and they sell them to East Donegal which is a very good agricultural part of the country, in general as good as Tyrone.

43. Then their market would be in other parts of the North of Ireland?—Derry fair.

44. Do they export any of these?—I cannot say.

45. The CHAIRMAN.—They use donkeys; do they use mules much?—Very few.

46. Would they be included in horses?—No, but I can give you the numbers; there are very few mules in Ireland.

47. Mr. J. L. CAREW.—Can you distinguish the nature of the soil in different districts?—In Donegal West there is granite, in the southern part there it is mica slate: in the northern part of Mayo some of it is granite, and very little limestone; they have to import limestone.

48. Where is the limestone in the congested districts?—There is very little in any large tract.

49. The CHAIRMAN.—Are you well acquainted with the geological formation?—No, I just know it in a rough way.

50. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Is there any limestone in the south?—Very little at all in the congested districts.

51. The CHAIRMAN.—What inquiries were made by the Board before starting operations?—The Board issued a number of queries. It came into existence on the 5th of August, 1891. In the same month different residents in the congested districts were written to, and asked different questions about horses and bulls and other matters relating to the districts.

52. Have you a list of the questions?—I have the answers.

The CHAIRMAN.—You can put them in.

Witness (reading).—Mr. W. Hammond, J.P., Lord Conyngham's Agent, West Donegal, writing generally of Glenties Union, in reply to this query:—

"What class of stallion would you consider most suitable for improving the local breed of horses?"

Said:—

"I am myself in favour of a Hackney stallion."

And in reply to the query—"By what class of stallion are the mares usually served?"

He wrote:—

"Generally by a bad mongrel, consequently the ponies of this locality—some time since celebrated for their good qualities—are very much degenerated.

Mr. James Musgrave, D.L., the Lodge, Corrick, Co. Donegal, is in favour of "good Hackney ponies or Welsh ponies."

Mr. Wybrants Olphert, as regards the union of Dunfanaghy, is in favour of "a strong high stepping roadster 15 to 15½ high: a Cleveland bay if possible."

Mr. George Hewson, J.P., Newtown Manor, Sligo, as regards the union of Manorhamilton, says:—

"Hackney horses are very scarce in Ireland, and I think that a Norfolk trotter crossed with country bred mares would get saleable foals."

The Earl of Leitrim, as regards the union of Milford, is in favour of "the Hackney Suffolk Punch and if got large enough, with plenty of bone, the Welsh pony."

Mr. W. Sinclair, D.L., Drumbeg, Inver, Co. Donegal, as regards the union of Donegal, suggests "good half-bred fit for general work."

Mr. James F. Murphy, Dunfanaghy, as regards part of the unions of Dunfanaghy and Letterkenny, is in favour of "Suffolk Punch and Norfolk trotter for the better districts, and Welsh stallion ponies for mountain parts."

Mr. J. O. Lawder, J.P., Lawderdale, Ballinamore, as regards the unions of Mohill and Bawnboy, favours

"good large boned, either thorough or three-quarter bred animals, the former preferred."

James M'Cullagh, J.P., Glasslough, Co. Monaghan, as regards the unions of Castleblayney and Donegal, is in favour of "a stallion that would get good weight carrying hunters and harness horses."

53. The CHAIRMAN.—He doesn't mention the breed? *Witness.*—No (continuing to read). Mr. William Hawkes, Castletown, Berehaven, as regards the union of Berehaven, without mentioning the breed, says:—

"A well bred small class is required."

Mr. William Norwood, J.P., Ballyhalwick, Dunmanway, as regards the unions of Dunmanway, Skibbereen, Schull, Bantry, and Castletown Bere, favours "small Clydesdales."

Mr. John Brechan, Loughine, Skibbereen, as regards the union of Skibbereen, suggests "good strong thorough-bred horse with good action."

Mr. S. F. Prince, Ballycroy, Mayo, as regards the union of Ballycroy, north and south, favours "half bred stallion or Suffolk Punch."

Mr. John E. Barrett, Carriganass, Cork, as regards the union of Bantry, writes—"Small Suffolk Punch."

Mr. J. Townsend Trench, Kenmare, as regards the Kenmare union, favours "a strong mountain cob."

Mr. George O. Malley, J.P., Q.C., Straidhill, county Mayo, as regards the unions of Swinford and Castlebar, writes—"Good half bred horse, 16 hands at the least, for small farmers, but there are several of the larger farmers who greatly want a thoroughbred."

Mr. Hugh M'Ternan, Castlerea, county Roscommon, as regards Castlerea union, says—"The land is too poor and the mares too bad to cross with a thoroughbred sire; a large three-quarter bred horse would be best I think, or a sire capable of getting polo ponies and cobs."

Mr. John Golding, J.P., Derry Ormonde, Eyre Court, as regards Tuam union, favours "pure Clydesdale and pure thoroughbred."

Mr. George Hewson, D.L., Ennismore, Listowel, county Kerry, as regards Listowel union, favours "a good Shire horse, lively and not too heavy. There are enough thoroughbreds for present wants."

In addition to these queries that I have mentioned as issued to people in the locality, the Board also sent letters to gentlemen in England and elsewhere who have a reputation about the breeding of horses.

Major Burrowes, Newbridge, county Kildare, writes to Mr. Wrench as follows:—

"I enclose Lord Tredegar's reply, which luckily gives his Show to come on this week. I have no doubt his promised enquiry will enlighten us as to the medium to further the project and attain the end. My 'marked' paragraph agrees with what I told you 'little cart-horses,' and 'there are stallions of *that* breed,' on receiving No. 2 you shall hear. I gather you wish to have '15 hands the standard, or to 14.2.' The 'Hackney Stallion' if *that* height, would suit admirably, but most are above that standard."

This is the enclosure from Lord Tredegar:—

"Tredegar Park, Newport, Monmouthshire,
"Nov. 21st, 1891.

"DEAR MAJOR BORROWES,—Our underground horses are regular little cart-horses under 15 hands, and there are stallions of that breed. The Welsh pony stallion that is led about the country is a bad sort of brute, whose only merit is that he is a very fast trotter. There are some that run wild on the hills in Breconshire, but those are weedy beasts. My idea of an animal to improve the breed of ponies is the Norfolk or Yorkshire 'Hackney,' Yorkshire for choice, as they have better shoulders. My 'Show' is on this week, and I will make enquiries of the animal you write about.

Oct. 20, 1896.
Mr. W. L. Micks.

"Yours very truly,
"(Signed), TREDEGAR."

Lord Leitrim writes:—

"Mulroy, Milford, Co. Donegal,
"5th Dec., '91.

"SIR,—I think the replies in the accompanying Query form pretty well cover the questions in your letter to me. My Stallions, two Clydesdales in succession, thoroughbred sire Young Artillery and an Arab Stallion that was General Stephenson's charger at the battle of Guiers, have all filled up, or perhaps I should say the Arab nearly so. I charged people who were not my tenants £3 3*s.* for Young Artillery, and used to get a good many, and always charged about a double fee to people who are not my tenants. My first Clydesdale was a special favourite. I think a Hackney and Pony Stallion would be made great use of in these parts.

"(Signed), LEITRIM."

Mr. Thomas M'Mahon writes from Bree House, Castleblayney, 12th December, 1891:—

"DEAR SIR,—In reference to your letter, I think Norfolk or Cambridgeshire is the best place to get Hackney stallions. You can get them there from 13 hands to 15.3 hands, or you can get them at York or Beverly or at Bradford, but I prefer Norfolk for the best goers, but they must be bought with lean neck, and good shoulders and good quarters, and they are the best cross for Connemara ponies. If you like I will buy one for you and charge you nothing but my expenses, as I can buy it cheaper than you can, as I know the country so well, I can get you any height or any colour you choose. I can go any day after Friday, 25th of this month."

Mr. Burdett-Coutts, writing from 1, Stratton-street, London, on the 26th December, 1891, says:—

"DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your letter, which I have received on my return from America. I will very gladly be of any service in my power to the Congested Districts Board, in carrying out the Scheme which you have described. I send you herewith a copy of the book which I have recently published on the subject of what I call the 'new development' in horse-breeding, and I think that you will find, if you have time to peruse it, that the proposed experiment in Ireland falls directly within its scope.

"It is a little difficult for me to advise you definitely, without being acquainted with the exact type of ponies from which it is desired to breed, and without knowing what class of animals will find the best market in the special districts.

"Assuming, however, on these two points—(1.) That the matrix will consist of undersized stock, short of both quality and action, and in addition, weedy and light of bone; and (2) that it is desired so to raise the standard of excellence that while the stock produced will be more serviceable for the common purposes which are at present to be served, breeders will also have an opportunity of getting here and there a horse, with fine action and shapes, which would fetch good prices from the harness dealer and so gradually draw a better class of dealers into the districts. I have no hesitation in strongly advising the use of the Hackney stallion.

"I do not believe in the Arab, nor do I think the result just mentioned would be in any way advanced by the use of a small thoroughbred. The thoroughbred is not the horse to get harness stock because in 99 cases out of 100 his produce is deficient in action, which now raises the price of the harness horse all over the world, and further, because his tendency is

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to get them high on the leg and light of bone. The Hackney corrects the latter deficiences, gives width, strength, weight-carrying, and draught-power, and in addition, gives action.

"It goes without saying that you must get the right sort of Hackney, because there are a great many of the wrong sort.

"Now, as to the question of price, which I had better deal with at once.

"I do not think that it would be wise for you to attempt the experiment with the Hackney, unless you can induce the Board to give £50 more per horse than the stated price. Even then, £200 at the present time would not buy any stallion worth his keep if it were not for the limit of height that the conditions of the existing stock which you mention enable you to accept. If your Board will consider how quickly the extra £50 is distributed in value over a number of foals in a year, they will, I think, hardly imperil the success of the experiment on this account.

"There are very many important considerations in choosing a Hackney such as black-blood, reliability for endurance, &c., which must be added to those you mention of action and shapes.

"I am, as you know, much interested in the industrial progress of Ireland, and I should be extremely glad to see the experiment made successful. I consider it eminently a move in the right direction, and I would spare no trouble in contributing to have it started upon what, in my opinion, would be the most promising basis.

"I am greatly occupied at present, but if you could suggest any means whereby, in the limited space of time which would be at my disposal for such a purpose, I could have a personal inspection of the average type of horses or ponies which it is desired to improve, I would endeavour to run over to two or three of the districts for that purpose. If you will kindly look through the book that I am forwarding herewith, I may expect, perhaps, to hear from you again on the subject."

54. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What is the price?—He says £200 would be little enough.

55. The CHAIRMAN.—Have you got the letter that was in reply to?—I have not.

56. Have you got the questions asked—he seems to be giving his own opinions very much?—The questions were these—

"(1) What class of stallion would you consider most suitable for improving the local breed of horses?

"(2) By what class of stallion are the mares usually served?"

Witness (continuing to read).—The Right Hon. Henry Chaplin, writes as follows from Board of Agriculture, S.W., on the 1st January, 1892:—

"It depends entirely on what the produce is wanted for. With my present information I should say Yorkshire Hackneys, not Norfolk. The former have more courage and are a stouter sort. Sir G. Wombwell, Newburgh, Easingwold, is a first-rate judge of Hackneys, and an authority well worth consulting. In Ireland I imagine Lord Waterford is one of the best authorities all round on matters connected with horses, but there are many others whom Mr. Wrench will know quite as well or better than I do. You may send him this."

57. Mr. J. L. CAREW.—That is the late Lord Waterford?—Yes. (Continuing to read). Sir George Wombwell, writing from Newburgh Priory, Easingwold, Yorkshire, on the 11th January, 1892, says:—

"In reply to yours, I would most certainly advise your using our Yorkshire Hackney Stallions in preference to an Arab Stallion. What you want to get is action, and you will get this if you put a well-bred pony mare 14·3 hands high or 15 hands high to a good Yorkshire Hackney Stallion—at least this is my experience."

Sir Walter Gilbey, writing from Elsenham Hall, Essex, on the 2nd January, 1892, says:—

"I do not anticipate any great difficulty in obtaining Spanish (Andalusian) Stallions.

"It is possible you are correct in your belief, the people themselves would prefer a small good stepping Hackney, and I am sure *the cross will produce stock which will pay for breeding.*

"I did not answer your question as to cost. Small Hackney stallions can be obtained at about £150 to £200. If you care to know, I have no doubt a choice can be arranged for inspection, &c. General Thornhill has been purchasing for the Government, for India, and could assist you I have every reason to believe."

58. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—I would like to know the date these questions were sent out?—In the end of 1891.

59. The price is very different now from what it was then.—The next letter is from Mr. Charles T. Tunnard. Writing from Rochford, Bedford, January 4th, 1892, he says:—

"I am in receipt of your letter concerning Stallions for your congested districts. As you well know I was strongly opposed to the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland, but the majority of the Royal Dublin Society thought otherwise, and have allowed the English Roadster to set foot on Irish soil. As far as *ponies* are concerned, there is only one horse to improve them, and that is the Hackney, and I should much prefer those Stallions which are bred in a certain district of Yorkshire, as they are of much finer quality than the Norfolk horses. Arabs are faulty in every respect, except the way in which their tails are set on. Small Thoroughbred Stallions are weeds themselves, and, therefore, would most likely get nothing but worthless weeds. If you should decide on having Hackney Stallions I shall be most happy to do anything for you in the way of procuring them, as I know every breeder in the country, and might, possibly, save you some hundreds in their purchase."

Mr. Tunnard is an English gentleman who has judged the hunter classes at the Dublin Horse Shows on several occasions. The next letter is from Mr. W. Tower Townshend. Writing from Myross Wood, Leap, Co. Cork, 3rd March, 1892, he says:—

"I see in the *Farmer's Gazette* of the 27th ultimo, that Hackney stallions have been purchased by the above, and I hasten to request that you will inform me on what terms they will be supplied.

"There is not a part of Ireland, to my knowledge, that requires a stallion of good breed more than this does. The breed is yearly getting worse, and lately all the principal dealers have left off attending our one annual horse fair of any note (Ballybuoy), as they say nothing worth purchasing is to be got there.

"To remedy this lamentable state of things, I purchased the thoroughbred stallion 'Controversy' in the autumn of 1890, and, though I could not afford to, let his services under two guineas to working farmers. I got as many for him last season as I liked to give him. One well-bred horse, however, is utterly inadequate to meet the great demand for improvement there is in the horse-breeding line here, and, could I afford it, I would keep six or seven stallions, as I cannot imagine anything that would do the country more good. Going about amongst the farmers, as I do, I find the greatest taste for good horses, but no power to supply it.

"I have long felt that the "Hackney" is just the class of stallion for this district, and with this view I went over to London last March, to the great Hackney Show, and got an introduction to Mr. Burdett-Coutts, who very kindly showed me his perfect stud of

Hackneys, but I was unable to afford his prices as he asked me £250 for a two year old stallion."

"To buy a badly bred stallion would be to do the country more harm than good, so I had to return without one."

60. The CHAIRMAN.—Is he residing in a congested district?—Yes, my lord, Skibbereen.

(Continuing to read). Mr. Richard Barter, St. Ann's Hill, Co. Cork, wrote on the 8th December, 1892—

"I was in Norfolk in October and had a look at some of the Hackney Studs there. I feel sure they are well calculated to vastly improve our mountain ponies. I think it would be both useful and instructive to watch the breeding of pure Hackneys in this country, and would I think still more stimulate their use if the farmers saw some good mares and their gets. I would be glad to co-operate with your Board in this direction. I have now three pure-bred Hackney mares, two of them winners of several first prizes in Norfolk; and if your Board would place a good blood Hackney stallion in the Macroom scheduled district that could be used with them, I would then be glad to arrange to show the mares at some of the most important fairs, or any other place suggested.

"Would you kindly bring this matter under the consideration of your Board?"

61. Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE.—That is Mr. Barter of Blarney, Co. Cork?—Yes.

(Continuing to read). The Clerk of Donegal Union, writing on the 28th February, 1893, says—

"There is a very great desire in this neighbourhood to secure the services of a stallion—either Hackney or Suffolk Punch—if you think there would be any use in our applying for one, would you kindly have the necessary forms sent to me."

The Earl of Zetland, writing on 3rd January, 1894, from Aske, Richmond, Yorkshire, says—

"I must thank you very much for your most interesting letter, by which I am glad to see that your scheme for improving the breed of horses in Ireland is getting into shape. I think you are working on quite the right lines, and shall be glad to hear in course of time the decisions arrived at by the Committee of the Royal Dublin Society. I am also very glad to hear that the Hackneys are doing well. I hope that you quite understand that my former remarks about these were not intended to disparage the Hackney stallions, but only to express my idea that they should be kept apart from the Hunter breed, I have always thought that they would prove most valuable animals in the congested districts, when they replace stallions of a very inferior quality.

"I am very glad there is so good a demand for their services in the congested districts, and feel confident that they will make their mark before long, if they have not already done so."

62. The CHAIRMAN.—What are the former remarks that he alludes to?—A former letter, I presume, written to Mr. Wrench.

63. Not the letter you have read?—No.

64. Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE.—What is the date of that letter?—3rd January, 1894.

65. The CHAIRMAN.—Who is that letter from?—Lord Zetland.

66. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—What is the date of the other, from Mr. Richard Barter?—December, 1892.

The CHAIRMAN.—There were letters received from the Congested Districts Board before they decided what to do. I do not think we want letters received since.

Witness.—The letters up to Lord Zetland's were in the earlier stage—the other letters are later.

67. The CHAIRMAN.—Before you leave the letters, is there any information in any of the letters received from gentlemen living in the congested districts that would be useful to us—first of all what were the questions sent out?

Witness.—First—"What class of Stallion would you consider most suitable for improving the local breed of horses in congested districts?"

68. Was any information received in the letters as to the character of the local breed of horses?—Some of the letters do contain that.

69. Mr. WRENCH.—Was not there a second question as to the character of the stallions in the district?—Yes, this was the query—"By what class of stallion are the mares usually served?"

70. The CHAIRMAN.—All you have told us was as to the character of the stallion recommended?—Yes.

71. I understand from Mr. Wrench there was a second query as to the character of the existing stallions?—Yes, I am coming to that afterwards. If you do not wish to hear any further letters from 1894 I will go to the second question.

The CHAIRMAN.—I don't think we need have any more of the letters.

Witness.—Well, the second query was—"By what class of stallion are the mares usually served? And in reply to that Mr. Wm. Hammond, Donegal, writes:—

"Generally by a bad mongrel; consequently the ponies of this locality, sometime since celebrated for their good qualities, are very much degenerated.

Mr. James Musgrave, Donegal, writes:—

"Cannot ascertain breed, but they cannot be of good quality."

Mr. W. Olphert, Donegal, writes:—

"The very worst sort."

Mr. George Hewson, Sligo, writes:—

"Ordinary country stallions."

The Earl of Leitrim writes:—

"Common badly bred stallions, except those served by Lord Leitrim's pure bred Clydesdale and Arab stallions, but of course they are capable of serving only a small proportion. A thoroughbred stallion of Lord Leitrim's served seasons 1887, 1888, and 1890.

Mr. W. Sinclair, D.L., Donegal, writes:—

"Indifferent half-bred."

Mr. James F. Murphy, J.P., Donegal, writes:—

"Class of stallions are improving of late; mares are generally served by Clydesdale thoroughbred.

72. The CHAIRMAN.—Where is that from?

Witness.—North-west Donegal. (Continuing to read).

Mr. J. O. Lawder, Leitrim, writes:—

"Bad third-rate small stallions."

Mr. James M'Cullagh, J.P., Monaghan, writes:—

"Under-bred horses, which attend fairs and markets."

Mr. Wm. Hawkes, Castletown, Berehaven, writes:—

"Small common class."

Mr. Wm. Norwood, J.P., Dunmanway, writes:—

"Broken-down weedy thoroughbreds."

Mr. John Brechan, Skibbereen, writes:—"Common bred brutes, not fit for anything."

Mr. S. F. Prince, Mayo, writes:—"Ordinary stallions of the same class as the mares referred to (a fair class of mare, somewhat larger than a Connemara or Achill pony.)"

73. Lord ASHTOWN.—What part is that from?—Ballycroy, Mayo.

(Continuing to read.)—Mr. John E. Barrett, Carriganass, Cork, writes:—"No special class."

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Mr. Townsend Trench, Kenmare, writes :—"Mountainy brutes."

Mr. George O Malley, Mayo, writes :—"A coarse, small, bad class, when crossed with Achill or Connemara ponies, giving a weedy, bad stock."

Mr. Hugh M'Ternan, Roscommon, writes :—"Half-bred Clydesdale."

Mr. John Golding, Derry Ormonde, Eyrecourt, writes :—"Half-bred Clydesdale and thoroughbred."

Mr. George Hewson, D.L., Kerry, writes :—"Light thoroughbred stallions and ill-bred breeds."

Witness (continuing) said—In addition to these the Board sent out Inspectors of their own to make inquiries in different parts, not merely about horses but different matters.

74. The CHAIRMAN.—Agricultural matters?—Yes, but the question of horses included.

75. How many Inspectors?—Six or seven.

76. And they reported separately?—Yes. Mr. Redmond Roche, as regards Brosna, County Kerry, reports :—

"The breed of horses has deteriorated from the use of weedy thoroughbred stallions. The introduction of good Hackney stallions would be very beneficial."

And as regards Coom, County Kerry :—

"A better class of stallions, Hackney for choice, are very necessary in the district."

Mr. F. G. Townsend Gahan, as regards Fanad, County Donegal, reports :—

"There are a large number of horses in the district, many of them large coarse animals, but not at all suitable for the farmers who own them. I believe Lord Leitrim has a Clydesdale stallion at Mulroy; but it is not a breed at all suitable for the peasantry, even when crossed with their small mares. A stallion Hackney or Suffolk Punch, located at Rosnakill (a central point but not a "Congested" Electoral Division), would be of immense service to the people."

Major Ruttledge-Fair, as regards Carna, county Galway, reports :—

"There are a good many mares in this district, and I think the village of Kilkieran would be a good centre to place a Hackney sire next season. It is seventeen miles from Cashel, where a Barb stallion stood this season."

And as regards Clifden, county Galway :—

"A small Hackney sire, about 14½ hands, with good bone and action, should next year be sent to Ballyconneely. There are a large number of mares, quite 300, in that part of the district, and if another good Barb sire could be purchased, he, too, might be sent there."

And as regards Louisburgh, county Mayo :—

"There are a large number of mares, and one or two Hackney stallions, about 14½ hands, with good bone, would soon effect an immense improvement."

And as regards Partry, counties Galway and Mayo :—

"There are a large number of mares in this district. Tourmakeady, where there is a police station, and which is very central, would be a very good place for a Hackney stallion. With the exception of Louisburgh and Ballyconneely, I do not know a district where a good stallion is so much required."

He reports in a few months later, after the horses were sent down :—

"It is almost universally admitted that the introduction of small Hackney sires has been generally appreciated by the people, and the arrangements have, as a rule, been satisfactorily carried out.

"The only district where, as far as I am aware, the scheme has not worked well is at Clonbur, in Co. Galway. The Hackney—"Fashion 3rd—placed there has not, it is thought by some, sufficient quality for the class of mares generally found in that district. It must be remembered that Clonbur is rather better circumstanced than most of the congested districts, and that it is only seven miles from Ballinrobe, one of the best districts in the West of Ireland, where the services of really good thoroughbred sires have always been available.

"Complaints have also been made as to restrictions imposed in the Letterfrack district. It appears that the services of the stallion placed there were available for only a short period each day. The stable where the horse was located being more than three miles from the police barrack was, I presume, the reason why this rule was made. Next year stabling might be secured either in the village or close to Letterfrack, where the police barrack is situate.

"The Arab stallions did not take so well, being considered too weedy and light by the country people. The Barb, "Awfully Jolly," did very well at Cashel, Co. Galway.

"Two of the very best horse-breeding districts were this year left without stallions, viz., Louisburg, Co. Mayo, and Ballyconneely, Co. Galway. *In both these districts horse-breeding is one of the chief resources of the people.* I would recommend that Hackney stallions be sent to both these stations next year. Perhaps a Barb sire might be sent to Ballyconneely, in the Clifden Union, as there are over three hundred mares in that district.

Mr. J. E. Butler, as regards Killorglin, county Kerry, reports :—

"Horses are small and poorly bred; a Hackney stallion would do much good if stationed in Glanbehy."

And as regards Caherciveen, county Kerry :—

"The horses are small, badly bred, and much deteriorated. The introduction of a few good Hackney and farm sires would be advantageous."

And as regards Waterville, county Kerry :—

"The breed of horses is poor and deteriorated from breeding from generations of bad sires. There being no stallion in this district, a Hackney stallion in Loughcurrane Electoral Division, and another at Westcove in Caherdaniel Electoral Division would produce a much required improvement in the horses of this and surrounding districts."

Mr. Henry Doran reports as regards Swinford, county Mayo :—

"A good stallion is never offered for service to the small farmers' mares here. The service fee which they would give would not repay anyone for the keep of a good horse. The mares are small and ill-shaped, and of no fixed character. They are not strong enough to cross with thoroughbred stallions unless such as possess exceptionally strong bone. To prepare the way for a useful class of horses in this district, I think the most suitable to use would be the best description of what are commonly called 'half-bred' sires — animals possessing good bone, good action, and as much breeding as can be got. For many of the mares a Cob or Hackney stallion would be most suitable."

The same gentleman reports as regards the district of Ardnaree, counties of Sligo and Mayo :—

"Prevent the service of the many ill-shaped and unsound sires now in the district and substitute good Cob or Hackney stallions with good quarters, good shoulders and action, and good bone. There are a great many Cob mares in this district. They have

bad quarters and straight shoulders, and are bad movers."

And as regards the district of Ballaghaderreen, counties of Sligo, Mayo, and Roscommon :—

"The mares are of a mixed class, and few of them good. The light weak ones would beget useful stock if crossed with small Suffolk Punch stallions. Others if crossed with a Cob or Hackney stallion would produce good roadsters. The best of the mares should be crossed with thoroughbred horses of good bone and action."

Major D. P. Gaskell, as regards the district of Desertegney, county Donegal, reports :—

"These are a small, useful, active class, wanting only an infusion of good blood to produce a noticeable breed. Among them are mares well suited for carrying out the object of the Board in sending a fine Hackney stallion into the district. Unfortunately the distance of these three Electoral Divisions from Carndonagh, where the horse is stationed, appears to be a bar to full advantage being taken of his services. There are only two foals by 'Lord Tennyson' in this district. Both are particularly good specimens. One of them was sold by the breeder to a neighbour for £8 at seven months' old, at the same time that the other ordinary local foals fetched from £4 to £7; the other of the two is now for sale, and the owner says he has refused £8 for him. Whether the small means, poor pastures, ill-fenced enclosures, and rough appliances at the disposal of the small farmers will enable them to rear and manage the high spirited progeny of the Hackney stallions is a question which the future must determine. Some of the colts have already shown remarkable fencing proclivities and powers. The average price of the yearling hitherto may here be taken at £6."

77. The CHAIRMAN.—Are these all the reports?
Witness.—Yes.

78. Do you know how these gentlemen were selected?—Appointed by the Board; two or three of these gentlemen are still in the employment of the Board.

79. I want to know if they would be available as witnesses?—Mr. Redmond Roche is dead, but I think all the others would be available.

80. Would you be able to give us their addresses?—Yes.

81. Is that all you have to say on the subject of the inquiries you have made?—That is all.

82. The CHAIRMAN.—Perhaps, before I ask any more questions, it may be convenient for the Members of the Commission to put any question they have to ask on this point.

83. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—I would like to know if you have any means of giving the prices charged for the stallions, the native stallions, before the introduction of the Congested Districts Board's stallion into these districts?—I am afraid not.

84. In one of those letters, I think some reference was made to the price charged for the stallions?—Yes, there was one letter from Lord Leitrim, saying what he charged.

85. And some other gentlemen?—The other gentleman was from the county of Cork. He said he charged two guineas, that he could not afford to charge less than two guineas. I believe the usual fee was 10*s.*, 15*s.*, or £1, payable a year after, if the mare foaled.

86. Can you tell us from your own experience has the price of a stallion anything to say to his popularity?—I don't think the local people know the prices of our stallions.

87. No, but the local stallions?—No, I can't say.

88. The CHAIRMAN.—Perhaps, better answers can be got from some other witnesses on that point.

89. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—When you were showing the different congested districts, and discussing them in reference to horse-breeding schemes, do horse-breeding schemes exist in every part of the congested districts?—No. This (map) shows roughly where the horses are stationed.

90. Do not the dots practically cover the whole of the congested districts?—Ridges of mountains and other barriers come in between, and exclude some localities from others that look near.

91. Mr. CAREW.—What is that district near Portumna?—That is Woodford.

92. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—These statistics you have given us of the number of the horses and the different uses they are put to, were selected from the Registrar-General's statistics, I take it?—Not from any published statistics yet.

93. They are statistics collected by the Constabulary for the Registrar-General?—They are.

94. Do you know, or can you tell me, how horses, two-year-olds and over, are defined as agricultural horses?—No. I can't say.

95. Because there are many horses used for agricultural purposes up to three years old, and then used for recreation and amusement afterwards, and it does not seem to me that there is any means by which the Constabulary can decide which horses are purely agricultural, and which horses are intended for recreation?—I don't think people in congested districts keep horses for amusement. They only keep them for agricultural purposes.

96. But a man may breed horses for amusement?—No, I don't think so.

97. Well he may sell them for amusement only?—He would sell them for profit only.

98. You read for us a number of replies to queries sent out by the Congested Districts Board to gentlemen who reside in the congested districts as to the best sort of stallion for those districts. Can you tell us how many are in favour of the Hackney stallion?—About one half, roughly speaking. I did not summarise them.

99. Then you read us a number of letters from different gentlemen and it would appear they were not in reply to any circular, but in reply to letters written to them directly?—By Mr. Wrench, most them.

100. Are these letters in existence?—Yes, they can be got.

101. The CHAIRMAN.—It may be well to hand in any letters to which the letters you have already read are answers?—Yes, my lord.

102. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Then Mr. Burdett-Coutts apparently recommended £200 as the lowest price at which a suitable Hackney stallion could be purchased. Can you tell us the prices that you paid for them subsequently?—Yes, I am coming to that.

103. The Hackney stallions were under 15 hands high?—Of course that appears from the records.

104. Well then, I see a number of these gentlemen who made statements and wrote letters referred to the former stallions in the districts?—Yes.

105. I see in several of the replies they speak of the thoroughbred stallions that were in those districts as broken down weedy thoroughbreds, and it does not appear from any of those replies that a respectable thoroughbred horse ever did cover in those districts?—Lord Leitrim had one. He mentions the horse "Controversy."

106. Mr. CAREW.—No, that is another horse?—Lord Leitrim had one also, "Young Artillery" he was called.

107. Mr. Townsend said he had a thoroughbred "Controversy," and that his subscription was quite full?—Yes, and another gentleman said that there were enough of thoroughbreds in the district.

108. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—But it seems to have been a general consensus of opinion amongst those gentlemen that the thoroughbred stallion that existed in

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the districts was a broken down weedy animal?—Yes, it appeared that the local stallions were all bad and inferior.

109. You mentioned several of the inspectors who were sent round to these different districts. Can you give us any idea of the instructions given to these different inspectors?—Yes, they came before the Board, and they had conferences with the Board and with members of the Board separately, and then letters of instruction were given to them.

110. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you furnish us with those letters of instruction?—I don't know. The letter was merely a covering letter with a string of queries, but I can furnish the queries quite easily.

111. I suppose they were all the same?—All the same, my lord; it was a circular letter.

112. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—It struck me as rather strange certainly that although not more than half the replies to the queries to the residents in the districts advocated Hackney stallions that reference is directly made to Hackney stallions in the report of every-one of the Inspectors, and I wish to know whether the Inspectors were sent round previous to the purchase of the Hackney stallions by the Board?—Yes.

113. In every case?—Except in the case of Major Gaskell, and in the report of Major Gaskell he speaks of the fencing proclivities of the animals.

114. Now, these gentlemen, Mr. Roche, Major Ruttledge-Fair, Mr. Henry Doran, Mr. Butler, Major Gaskell, and the others, did they report on matters connected with agriculture as well as horse breeding?—Oh! Yes, and other matters besides agriculture even.

115. Do you know had they any practical knowledge of horse breeding?—Some of them had. Mr. Redmond Roche had, Mr. James Butler has, Major Ruttledge-Fair, I believe, has, and Mr. Henry Doran has. I cannot speak for Major Gaskell's qualifications personally. Mr. Gahan I know as a man who keeps horses, but I don't know more than that.

116. Now, as to sending out these queries, you read replies from ten gentlemen living in the congested districts?—Yes; more than that. I think from nineteen.

117. Were all these all the replies received by the Board to the tables of queries?—I don't know. I should say not.

118. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you find out for us?—Yes, I can easily.

119. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Then you read letters from some other gentlemen, from Lord Zetland, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, Sir Walter Gilbey, and others. Do you know how many gentlemen with practical knowledge in connection with horse breeding were consulted in England, and how many in Ireland, for I noticed that all the letters you read were from England?—No, there were letters from Major Burrowes, Lord Leitrim, and others.

120. Didn't Major Burrowes say he was merely the vehicle to convey the views of Lord Tredegar?—"Hackney stallions, 14.2 to 15 hands high," Major Burrowes says, "would suit admirably, and most of them are above that standard." And there were also letters from Lord Leitrim, Mr. Thomas M'Mahon, Castleblayney; Mr. Townsend, Mr. Richard Barter, the Clerk of the Donegal Union, and Lord Lismore.

121. Mr. Richard Barter has himself a stud of thoroughbred Hackneys?—He has.

122. The CHAIRMAN.—Possibly we can get the definition of a horse for an agricultural horse and a horse for pleasure better from the Registrar General's Office than from you?—You can.

123. When these gentlemen were sent out to report to the Board do you know had the Board come to any conclusion as to the best class of stallion to send to the congested districts?—No; this was prior to it as far as I know. I think the conclusion was come to about Arabs, at that time the Queen made a present of an Arab to the Board.

124. Do you know whether those gentlemen were selected mainly for their knowledge of agriculture in general or for their knowledge of horses in particular?—The Board's Inspectors.

125. Yes?—No, I think they were selected, not with any special view to horses, but because of an all round knowledge of the country and its conditions.

126. You mentioned just now that some of them were well acquainted with horses?—Yes.

127. Do you consider yourself capable of saying whether they were or not?—My only means of knowing was their usual reputation, and they have the reputation of knowing about horses.

128. Do you know why Lord Tredegar was consulted?—I don't.

129. Was it with regard to the capabilities of Welsh ponies being something similar to ponies in the congested districts?—I think it was as to Welsh ponies.

130. Do you know whether any steps were taken to ascertain what class of stallion had been put to the Exmoor and New Forest pony?—No; I have not heard anything as to Exmoor or New Forest ponies.

131. Then, the Board having made these inquiries, came I suppose to some conclusion as to what steps to take?—They started with about seventeen horses. The first year they had seventeen horses; in the first season——

132. That is in 1892?—Yes; in 1892 they started with seventeen horses, one Cleveland Bay; one Barb; three Arabs, and the remainder, 12 Hackneys.

133. That was in 1892?—Yes.

134. How many in all?—Seventeen the first year.

135. How many have you now?—I have got now a list of fifty, including ponies. Some of the fifty are no longer in the Board's hands. Some were old, and were got rid of, some were sold, and a few died. Altogether the Board bought thirty-six Hackneys. They are as follows: Rokeby, North Riding, Real Gentleman, Callis' Fireaway, Beau, Fashion III., Lord Go Bang, Zeus, Lord Derwent, Fireaway II., King Fireaway, Lord Tennyson, Highgate Performer, Romulus II., Gay Lad III., Earl of Nithsdale, Flying Fireaway, Ireland's Duke of York, Chantilly I., Matchless Fireaway, Bursea Performer, Bay Malton, Lord Leppington, Proud Dane, Lord Saxon, Lord Sheridan, Merry Lord, Lord Domville, Carnarvon, Derwent, Enthorpe Duke, Grimston Performer, Floodsferry Cadet, Lord Middleton, Sir Tatton, and Convoy. These were all the Hackneys that have been bought.

How many?—Thirty-six.

136. Mr. WRENCH.—Isn't it a fact that two of the animals, Grimston Performer and Floodsferry Cadet, were hired by the Board, and Chantilly I. and Lord Domville and two or three more were bred?—Yes.

137. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You acquired thirty-six Hackneys altogether?—Yes; they are on our list.

138. CHAIRMAN.—And there are fifty altogether, including what you bought, bred, and hired?—Yes. There are fifty animals altogether. The remainder are—*Cleveland Bay*, Bay Benedict, in North Kerry; a *Barb*, Awfully Jolly; *Arabs*, Ali Baba, Desert Born and Tirassan; *Welsh cobs*—Electricity, Sunbeam, Express IV., and Prince Llewellyn; *Welsh ponies*, Welsh Tommy and Movement; and two *thoroughbreds*, St. Aidan and Uncle Sam.

139. Can you tell us where the horses were placed?—Rokeby was in Ballinamore in 1892 and 1893, in Oughterard in 1894, and in Carndonagh in 1895. North Riding started in Schull in 1892, was in Donegal in 1893, and Ballinamore in 1894; he was sold. Real Gentleman was started in Dunfanaghy in 1892, and was in Dunfanaghy also in 1893 and in 1894, and Louisburgh in 1895. Callis' Fireaway was at Achill Island in 1892 and 1893, and in Belmullet in 1894. Beau started in Newport in 1892, was in Newport also in 1893, and in Dungloe in 1894, 1895, and 1896. Fashion III. was in Clonbur in

1892, in Kenmare in 1893 and 1894, and in Dingle in 1895 and 1896. Lord Go Bang was in Letterfrack in 1892, in Carrigart in 1893 and 1894, and in Caherciveen in 1895 and 1896. Zeus was in Dungloe in 1892 and 1893, and in Cashel in 1894. Lord Derwent was in Belmullet in 1892, and at Achill Sound in 1893. Fireaway II. was in Swinford in 1892, 1893, and 1894, and in Kenmare in 1895. King Fireaway was in Oughterard in 1892, and in Caherciveen in 1893 and 1894. Lord Tennyson was in Carndonagh in 1892, in Ardara in 1893, 1894, and 1895, and in Letterfrack in 1896. Highgate Performer was in Dingle in 1893 and 1894, and in Carrigart in 1895. Romulus II. was in Schull in 1893 and 1894, at Achill Sound in 1895, and in Castletownbere in 1896. Gay Lad III. was in Bantry in 1893 and 1894, and in Swinford in 1895 and 1896. Earl of Nithsdale was in Carndonagh in 1893 and 1894. Flying Fireaway was in Dunfanaghy in 1894, 1895, and 1896. Ireland's Duke of York was at Belmullet in 1895 and 1896. Chantilly I. was in Letterfrack in 1895, and in Cashel in 1896. Matchless Fireaway was in Donegal in 1894. Bursea Performer was in Grange in 1895, and in Louisburgh in 1896. Bay Malton was in Stranorlar in 1895 and 1896. Lord Leppington was in Newport in 1894, in Donegal in 1895, and in Carndonagh in 1896. Proud Dane was in Cashel and Letterfrack in 1895. Lord Saxon was in Newport in 1895, and in Clifden in 1896. Lord Sheridan was in Letterfrack in 1895, and in Newport in 1896. Merry Lad was in Newport in 1896. Carnarvon was in Ballinamore in 1895 and 1896. Derwent was in Schull in 1895, and at Achill Sound in 1896. Enthorpe Duke was in Bantry in 1895, and in Kenmare in 1896. Grimston Performer was in Louisburgh in 1895. Floodferry Cadet was in Cashel in 1895. Lord Middleton was in Carndonagh in 1895, and in Carrigart in 1896. Sir Tatton was in Churchill in 1895, and in Ballydehob in 1896; and Convoy was in Ardara in 1896. These are all the Hackneys. As to the others, the Cleveland Bay, Bay Benedict, was in Kilmorna in 1892 and 1893, and then he was sold. The Barb, Awfully Jolly, was in Cashel in 1892 and 1893, in Carraroe in 1894, and at Achill Sound in 1895 and 1896. Ali Baba was stationed in Belmullet in 1892; he was only hired for the season. Desert Born was stationed in Achill in 1892, and was in Achill again in 1894, and in Belmullet in 1895 and 1896. Tirassan was in Glenties in 1892, in Belmullet in 1893, and in Fintown in 1894. Electricity was in Louisburgh in 1893 and 1894, and in Carraroe in 1895 and 1896. Sunbeam was stationed in Letterfrack in 1893, and was there also in 1894, and was in Oughterard in 1895 and 1896. Express IV. was in Ballyconneely in 1893 and 1894, and in Keel, Achill Island, in 1895 and 1896. Prince Llewellyn was in Oughterard in 1893, in Aran Island in 1894 and 1895, and in Carndonagh in 1896. Welsh Tommy was at Achill Sound in 1893, in Swinford in 1894, and in Kiltimagh in 1895 and 1896; and Movement was in Carraroe in 1893, in Inishboffin in 1894, and in Clare Island in 1895 and 1896. The thoroughbred St. Aiden is at the Stud Farm, where he served some mares; and Uncle Sam was stationed in Bantry in 1896.

140. Do you know how the selections are made as to particular horses being stationed in particular places?—It is discussed by the Land Committee or the Horse Committee of the Board. They draw up a list of places, and then they consider and discuss amongst themselves where to put each horse, and then the list is drawn up, and posters printed.

141. Upon the subject of selecting the breed of the horse, do they decide upon that themselves?—That is all discussed at the Committee meeting.

142. That is without any reference to the wishes of the people of the locality?—Oh yes; the wishes of the people of the locality largely comes into it; people write letters.

143. Do horses of different breeds ever stand at the same station in the same locality?—Yes, we have a Hackney and an Arab stationed in the same place some years.

144. Would you have a Hackney and a thoroughbred?—At Bantry, no. The Hackney was there the year before.

145. Mr. La Touche.—But have you a Hackney and a thoroughbred standing in the same place?—No; the only place where a thoroughbred is is at Bantry.

146. The Chairman.—Then the Board has had no direct opportunity of seeing whether a Hackney or a thoroughbred would be preferred by having them both in the same place at the same time?—The only place where a thoroughbred is yet stationed in the country is at Bantry.

147. Mr. Wrench.—Do you know has there been any request from the people of Bantry with regard to the thoroughbred?—I don't remember.

148. Mr. Carew.—Do you know why Bantry was fixed on?—I really forget. I am only there in an official capacity; I dont know anything about horses, and I don't take note of such considerations very much.

149. The Chairman.—Do you know the number of services given by the stallions?—Rokeby served 172 mares.

150. Lord Ashtown.—In the four years?—Yes. That is an average of forty-three per season.

151. Lord Rathdonnell.—Would it be possible to give from the year 1892 downwards the services by each breed, by the Hackneys, the Arabs, and the other classes?—I can give the total number for each year; they have not always stood in the same place. I can give the total number of Hackney services for the whole of 1892, 1893, and so on, but I have not the return made out in the way referred to. It is quite easy to prepare it. I have here the total number of services for each horse since he was acquired by the Board, and then I have the average number for each season.

152. Could you not take the Hackneys for 1892 and say how many services there were of Hackneys in 1892, how many of Arabs, how many of thoroughbreds, and so on?—That is one way to get at it, and I can easily have it for you.

153. You see we want the number of services of each class of horse for each year, that is, Arabs, Clevelands, Barbs, Hackneys?—Yes, I can easily prepare that.

154. The Chairman.—You could let us have that information?—Yes.

155. Lord Ashtown.—Where Arabs and Hackneys were standing together, which were preferred?—My recollection is that they both filled. I am pretty sure they both filled.

156. Mr. Carew.—Can you give us the prices paid for the thoroughbreds?—No.

157. The Chairman.—There is no objection to give us the figures as you have got them, Mr. Micks?

158. Mr. Wrench.—You have not the individual services for any year there?—No, I have the total number over all the years and the average for each year.

159. What Lord Ashtown would like is a return where two horses stood together, a Hackney and an Arab, a return of the services given by each horse?—Very well.

160. The Chairman.—What are the prices charged for services?—I can give the total number of the services. The number of services at 5*s.* was 5,191, at 10*s.*, 197, and at £1 the number was 288, making a total of 5,676.

161. What makes the variation in the prices?—It is the poverty of the small farmer.

162. You charge 5*s.* to some and £1 to others for the same horse?—Yes. The 5*s.* fee amounts to 91½ per cent. of the whole.

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163. LORD ASHTOWN.—Is it regulated by valuation?—Yes. The 10*s.* fees are 3½ per cent. of the whole and the £1 fees and over given are 5 per cent. In addition there are 122 free services as prizes for mares at local shows. The total number of services would be 6,042. A further number of 1,244 have been served this year up to the present, and that with the 5,676 up to the end of 1895, the 1,244 during the present year, and 122 free services, makes 6,042 as a total, and of these 4,295 services were Hackney services.

164. Mr. CAREW.—Up to the end of last year the services were 5,798 taking the free services?—Yes, and of these 4,295 were by Hackneys.

165. The CHAIRMAN.—As I understand the same fee is charged to the same class of person whether for the services of a Hackney or pony or Barb or thoroughbred?—That is so. This year the Board in some cases tried a higher fee—a 10*s.* fee in some places—specially where they were sending a very good horse, but I think as far as I can judge the Board are not inclined to continue the higher fee.

166. There is no definite rule on the subject?—Yes. The rule is that a poster is sent out with each horse, and full particulars are given in the posters.

167. There is no definite rule of the Board as to the fees charged and it may be varied?—It is fixed for each horse and it is practically 5*s.* for every horse with two or three exceptions hardly worth taking into account.

168. Have you anything further to tell us on this point?—I think not.

169. This system has been practically in operation since 1892?—The Board started in 1891. The Board began in the autumn of 1891, and they had 17 horses out in the season of 1892.

170. Are you in a position to give the Commission any information as to the general results of the working of your Board in your opinion?—The Board issued a series of queries to 34 people in the congested districts and a summary has been made of their evidence, a short summary. (Reading.) "The first query is:—At what ages do small farmers in the district usually dispose of the foals or horses which they breed? The replies to this question indicate that in the western or Connaught district, it is usual to sell as foals of from six to eight months of age. On rare occasions sale is deferred until one year or one year and a half, but this habit pertains to large occupiers or to those who are in better circumstances than the ordinary small holder. Mention is made in the report from Belmullet of some better class farmers who retain their young stock till two or three years of age. In the north-west or Donegal district six out of eight reports point to the usual age for sale as being at least one year. Sales, as foals of six months old, are, however, not unfrequent, while well-to-do farmers are stated occasionally to defer sale till two or three years of age have been attained. No explanation is given to show why one locality differs from another in the age of sale, but it may be inferred that there is considerable difference in the ability to keep possessed by the occupiers of land in the north-west. Not only may this difference reveal itself in more ample means but in the extent of land occupied by farmers, either in the holdings proper or the area of commonage. In the south-west sales usually take place from one or two years of age. Earlier and later sales are recorded, but these may be attributed either to exceptional poverty in the one case or prosperity in the other. Summarizing the evidence, as received from the whole area of congested districts, it is quite apparent that the general rule is to sell, either as foals after weaning or as yearlings. Those who retain till yearling or over three years old, although they may occupy land in congested districts, can hardly be described as in themselves constituting, as individuals, a portion of a congested population. They are in congestion, but not of it, and their system of farming and general mode of life differs materially from that which attaches to the small and very poor farmers, for whose benefit the scheme was originally instituted."

171. The CHAIRMAN.—Were these queries sent out this year?—Yes.

172. Are they sent out each year?—No; this year was the first season. The next query and the replies were as follows:—(Reading) Query II. (A.) What prices have been obtained by small farmers who have used the Board's stallion for the past few years for the produce of those stallions? (*B.*) How do these prices compare with the prices obtained during the same periods by similar classes of farmers for horses not bred by the Board's stallions? Five reports state that the foals by the Board's stallions sell either no better or very little better than those got by ordinary common stallions. In Clifden and Roundstone districts the absence of increased value appears to be especially marked, but it must be observed that the reports in those instances refer to the produce of the Barb rather than of the Hackney sire. In some parts of Donegal the cross by the Clydesdale or half-bred Clydesdale is said to be as popular and valuable as that by the Board's sire, the reason assigned being that the Clydesdale cross is the sooner fit for work. From every other district the use of the Hackney, Barb or Arab has resulted in an increased value of produce. In five reports, the increased value is not stated in figures, but described in modified terms, such as "a slight gain," "a gain," "prices higher." With these exceptions a substantial increase in price is reported. The price of foals from six to eight months old has increased from 10*s.* to as much as £5, irrespective of the saving on service fee amounting to, say, 10*s.* For one and a-half year olds, an increase varying from £2 to £6 is recorded. A fair average would be £2 10*s.*, to which must again be added 10*s.* saved on service fee, making a total increase of £3. Two year olds by the Board's sire, where such have been sold, have realized from £4 to £6 over the common breed, exclusive of the saving in service fee, and this increase in value continues to augment with age, for with reference to three year olds, from £8 to £16 is mentioned as having been gained in the selling price. The evidence on point of increased value is so divergent in character, that it does not afford material for any precise comparison or statement. The results of a few (in some reports very few) individual sales, can hardly be taken as sufficient to form a key to the whole position. But there appears to be no manner of doubt that in seventy-two or seventy-five per cent. of the districts where the Board has introduced sires, the value of young horses, whether sold as foals, yearlings, two year olds or three year olds, has been very considerably increased to those who have made use of the new stallions. In Connemara there seems to have been among the dealers a combined and so far successful attempt to undervalue or ignore the improving effects of the new blood, whilst, in exceptional cases, such as at Achill Sound and Keel, the Board's stallion would appear to have left bad stock behind him. It is important to observe that the willingness on the part of purchasers, to pay more for the new type of horses, is as well defined for two and three year olds as for foals and yearlings—rather more so if anything."

173. The CHAIRMAN.—As regards the prices of foals from six to eight months?—The price has increased from 10*s.* to as much as £5, irrespective of the saving on service fee amounting to, say, 10*s.*, that would be from £1 to £5 10*s.*.

174. Is £5 a common price to give?—I believe there were some exceptional prices for some of the produce of the Barb "Awfully Jolly."

175. Are the Commissioners to take it that the prices increased generally to that extent—10*s.* to £5 is a very large jump?—It is.

176. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say a better price was got from the Barb?—Yes. I think there was an

English commission for some foals. It is a celebrated polo-pony sire.

177. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you mean to say that the former price was 10*s.* and the present price was £5?—No. The foals used to run from about £3 or £4 to £5. The paragraph is—"The price of foals from six to eight months old has increased from 10*s.*," it should be by 10*s.*, "to as much as £5, irrespective of the saving on service fee amounting to, say 10*s.*"

178. It does not seem very clear. The increase was not from 10*s.* to the present price or £5. That is not what you mean?—No.

179. How many queries were there?—Five. That was in the answer to the second. The third query is:—(Reading)—"Query III.—Is the demand for the Board's stallions increasing or otherwise? Of 30 replies to Query III., 22 are in the affirmative; 4 are in the negative: 3 are in the indefinite; one says 'demand is stationary.' The replies apparently refer to the whole period which has elapsed since the commencement of the scheme, and when considering them, it is well to recollect that once the limit of mares is reached, there can be no further increase. This has taken place in many districts, and the fact may have given rise to misapprehension as regards increase or decrease in demand. There can be no doubt, however, that the alteration of service fees recently made has lost the Board customers, while, in a few instances, the stallion has either failed in his duties or, for some other cause, failed to please, and accordingly lost caste and credit. The lowness of fee is frequently quoted as an important factor in bringing mares to the Board's stallion. Query IV.—Are local farmers disposed to retain mares bred by the Board's stallion for breeding purposes? The replies indicate a distinct desire on the part of those who can afford it, or who have sufficient land and other necessities for young horses, to retain mares by the Board's stallions. Many are compelled, against their will and by reason of poverty, to sell what they would otherwise keep. At the same time there are some without taste or principle in breeding, who have no doubt sold when they might and could have retained. Query V.—What reduction (if any) in the number of inferior stallions has followed this action of the Board? From the evidence, it would appear that the presence of the Board's stallions has acted most sensibly on the number of ordinary and inferior sires in the congested districts. Some reports describe the old breed of horse as 'wiped out.' In other localities they have been castrated. Elsewhere they have been sold or left the country. In some markets they no longer exhibit. They get few mares and are made to do farm work. Their fees are greatly reduced in order to compete with the Board's horses. Facts showing the number of stallions for the years 1891-96 could probably be obtained from some reliable source, and such evidence would be superior to the wide answers given to query V."

180. These are all the questions?—These are all the questions.

After the adjournment.

181. The CHAIRMAN.—I think you mentioned some stallions as being sold?—I did, my lord, some of them were sold.

182. What were they?—"Rokeby," Hackney, "North Riding," Hackney, "Zeus," Hackney, "King Fireaway," Hackney, "Highgate Performer," I am not sure that he was not a hired horse, but he ceased to belong to the Board.

183. Do you know why they were sold?—A couple were sold because they were not considered satisfactory, and as regards two of them I think the Board sold to advantage, getting a good price for them.

184. Do you know to whom they were sold, what became of them?—The Indian Government.

185. They went out of the country?—Yes, to India.

186. They all went out of the country?—Two went to India.

187. What became of the others?—They were sold at a low price.

188. Did they remain in the country?—I don't think any of them remained in the country. Just before the adjournment I gave a general summary of the evidence as regards the prices that were obtained for the young horses produced by the Board's stallions. I can give the names of the people whose evidence is summarised, and I can give the prices that they mention as having been got for the young horses if you wish. Mr. Fallon, District Inspector, Ardara, County Donegal, says that the young ones sold at about six months old from the Board's horse fetch from £4 to £8, except about Glencolumbkill, a parish in his district, where the prices have not been so good on account of the smallness of the animals; £3 10*s.* was the highest price ever got before by the ordinary foals of the country. At Carndonagh, Mr. Hewitt, District Inspector, reports that the horses sold at one and a half years fetch from £9 to £12, the produce of half-bred Clydesdales used to realize about the same. At Carrigart, Mr. Hardy states that the young ones from the Board's horses go from £7 to £10 10*s.* in 1893.

189. Lord ASHTOWN.—What age?—About one and a half years old, and that these are higher prices; he does not say how much higher than the produce of the country stallions. Mr. Ingram, Dunfanaghy, says that for yearlings the Board's go from £5 10*s.* to £7, those rising two years old £8 10*s.* to £12, of exceptional merit up to £14, for two and a half year olds £14 to £17, and special ones as high as £20. For ordinary bred foals of similar ages prices are about 20 per cent. under those obtained from Hackney sires, except some half-bred Clydesdales that sell well, as they are ready for work early. The produce of Hackneys are about £3 on an average higher than those of country stallions. Mr. Boyle, Dungloe, states that the horses there are generally sold under a year, and for year olds and under, the prices for the Board's young ones is about £5 to £9, and for the ordinary stock from £2 to £4. Major Porter, Glenties.—Foals sold at six months fetch from £6 to £10, the produce of the Board's horses; the foals from other stallions fetch from £5; he does not say to what height they go. Mr. Manning, Milford, county Donegal.—Animals sold at a year or a year and a half old, for yearlings from £6 to £8 during the last three years; for one and a half years old £10 to £13; ordinary bred country horses, yearlings, £5 to £7, and one and a half years old, £8 to £11. Achill Sound.—Mr. John Carr says there is very little difference in the price of all foals; in a few instances the prices for produce of Board's stallions have exceeded the usual price for other breeds. Ballinamore.—Mr. J. Willard says—Very little difference in price. Mr. Nolan, Belmullet.—Hackney Arab foals and foals by Board's stallions sold at about six months old fetched from £5 10*s.* to £6 10*s.*, some reaching £7 10*s.*; others inferior, £5 to £5 10*s.* During the same period foals not by Board's stallions fetched £2 15*s.* to £3 10*s.*, £4 being an outside price. Carraroe, county Mayo.—Mr. Tweedy says foals by the Welsh cob "Movement" averaged £3 15*s.*, from local stallions £3, foals by the Barb "Awfully Jolly" averaged £3 5*s.*, but from local stallions for that age, six months old, £2 10*s.* Mr. J. Hughes, Cashel, near Roundstone, county Galway, says in 1893 the Board's young horses fetched from £4 to £7 10*s.* for foals, and foals by country bred stallions £3 to £5, in later years £3 to £5 for foals and ordinary country stallions produce about the same price. There is a note to this witness's report "Owing to the greater number being sold as Connemara ponies the prices of foals has varied little. In latter years the Board's horses were Hackneys and sales as foals have seldom occurred." Mr. Lowndes, Clifden, £2 15*s.* to £4 the average price for foals, and from local horses the foals fetch £2 15*s.* to £4. Mr. O'Hara, Kiltimagh, foals six months old from Board horses £4 to

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£4 10*s.*, at one year to one and a half £6 to £7, foals from "Welsh Tommy" fetched £3 10*s.* He does not give any particulars about the local horses. Mr. Howe, Newport, county Mayo, says the local horses sell at about £1 a head under the Hackney foals. Mr. Sullivan, Bantry, for one and a half years old prices ranging up to £12 10*s.* for Board's horses, average price for one and a half year olds not by Board's horses, £7. Mr. J. Butler, Waterville, for foals fifteen months old, £5 to £9 freely got, from the Board's stallions, from local stallions 40*s.* to 50*s.* lower than the produce of the Board's stallions. Mr. Gillman, Dingle, average price for one and a half year olds from Board's stallions, £10. £2 to £3 less by other stallions. Mr. Watson, Ballymoveagh, well-bred colts £30 and upwards at three years old, three year old colts of no certain pedigree £12 or £14. Mr. White, D.I., Kenmare, price of foals vary from £6 to £12 at one and a half years old down to six months, prices for yearlings not bred by Board's stallion slightly lower; he does not mention the amount. Schull, Mr. Dale, D.I., a six months foal by "Romulus II." sold for £5 10*s.*, one one and a half year old by "Romulus II." sold for £9 10*s.* in September, 1895. Then particulars are given of these several sales, the name of the buyer and seller is given, I can hand in that.

190. The CHAIRMAN.—I don't think you told us what was the price given for the Hackney stallions?—No; that will be the next head of my evidence, my lord.

191. I should like you to take it as you have got it, as far as you can. The returns of the horses in congested districts for the year 1896 show a decided increase over the number of horses in preceding years in those districts. There are eight congested district counties, and in seven of those an increase in the number of horses has taken place—are those counties entirely in the congested districts?—No; there is one county very little in the congested district—Co. Cork—and there there is a falling off; it is the only district that is partially congested where there has been a falling off. In the remainder of Ireland—in twenty-four counties—in eight there has been an increase and in sixteen there has been a decrease.

192. Lord ASHTOWN.—That table refers to the whole county, not the congested part?—Yes. I have not got them separately, but in the counties which are partly congested all, except one, have increased in the number of horses; and in the counties which are not congested there has been a decrease at the rate of two to one—two have decreased for one that has increased.

193. The CHAIRMAN.—That you got from the Registrar-General?—The agricultural statistics—a published volume. I am now about to give, my lord, some particulars about the expenditure that the Board has incurred on horse-breeding schemes from 5th August, 1891, to 31st March in this year. The expenditure is divided into two classes—capital expenditure and annual maintenance. Capital expenditure is as follows:—For the purchase of forty-two stallions, £8,015 1*s.* 9*d.*

194. Have you got the average?—No, my lord, this is not a return exactly, it is a form of account. For the purchase of eight mares, £1,295. This return also includes an expenditure for mares, and also for donkeys; I can take off the amount spent on mares and donkeys later on.

195. Lord RATHDONNELL.—The number of mares?—Eight Hackney mares.

196. Lord ASHTOWN.—That is Spanish donkeys?—Twenty-six donkeys, £930 7*s.* 2*d.* Then there are a couple of items in the account which don't exactly refer to the horse breeding, a farm horse and a mule which are used at the place, a stallion pony purchased in the island of Arran—in order to get rid of it—a farm horse for the Stud Farm use, £24, and then ten foals were bought in the country, half-breds, for observation purposes, they were the produce of the Board's horses, and some foals were bought in order that the Board might see how they turned out.

197. What were paid for them?—£73 10*s.*

198. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What year was that?—They were bought in different years.

199. What is the oldest one?—Three, I think.

200. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Where are they kept now?—At Shankill, county Dublin, on the Dublin and Bray line.

201. Then the eight mares purchased, are they there also?—They are also at the Stud Farm, the Board besides hired a couple of stallions. Hire of stallions, £190 3*s.* 9*d.*

202. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—In one season?—No; the total hiring, clothing, and equipment of stallions, £369 19*s.* 5*d.* Then the cost of the buildings, cost of Stud Farm and buildings, £4,526, furniture, £85 10*s.* implements, £176; introduction of water supply, £153; fencing, 79; fitting up stables in the country, £675. Total capital expenditure, £16,638 odd. Now the annual expenditure is divided into four columns, 1892–93, 1893–94, 1894–95, 1895–96, I can give them separately or the total of the four. Transport expenses, for bringing the stallions to and from the Stud Farm to the country, 1892–93, £211 odd; 1893–94, £239; 1894–95, £235; 1895–96, £290, total, £976. Keep in the country and forage while at the central Stud Farm, £865, £1,373, £1,192, £1,382, total, £4,814.

203. The CHAIRMAN.—I suppose the amount per head keeps about the same?—I can give the amount per head separately, I have separate returns for that; shoeing, veterinary fees, medicine, &c., £48, £281, £172, £147, total £649. Wages of manager and grooms, £841, £1,174, £1,183, £1,360, total, £4,560. In the summer when the stallions are in the country certain duties are performed by the Royal Irish officers and sergeants, and remuneration is paid to them as follows:—£246, £385, £335, £365, total £1,332 odd. For the Stud Farm, that is the farm where the horses are kept, in 1895–96, £72 5*s.* 4*d.*, that was the first year. Rent and taxes, 1893–94, £286; 1894–95, £194; 1895–96, £203, total £684. Labourers on farm, 1892–93, £3; 1893–94, £111; 1894–95, £88; 1895–96, £53 odd, total £256 odd. Coal, oil, &c., £4 16*s.*, £14, £17, £26, total £63. For inspection of mares for services, advertising for tenders, insurance of horses, &c., £324, £362, £216, £282, total £1,186 3*s.* 7*d.*

204. What do you mean by inspection of mares?—Before a mare is served I believe she has to be examined to see whether she is sound.

205. By a veterinary surgeon?—Generally I believe a District Inspector of Police, and sometimes a veterinary surgeon.

206. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Then if the mare is not sound?—She is not allowed to be served I understand.

207. That is the invariable practice?—I believe so.

208. The CHAIRMAN.—Is the Inspector of Police paid a fee for examining the mare?—I don't think he is; he is just paid his car hire to the place; he gets a small lump sum for his services in each year that would be included

209. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Then the mares that are served by these particular stallions have all to be sound, they are all examined?—They are always examined.

210. Lord ASHTOWN.—As to soundness, or as to shape or suitability?—I am afraid that question had better be asked of someone else, but they are examined.

211. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Can you say are the Board's stallions examined every year?—Do you mean by a veterinary surgeon? Oh, yes, we have a highly qualified man constantly there, one of the veterinary surgeons of Dublin, Mr. Daly, who is at the Stud Farm very often.

212. Are the stallions passed sound every season?—I cannot say, but I know they are continually

being looked after by Mr. Daly. Then the total annual maintenance expenditure, 1892–93 was £2,545; 1993–94, £4,225; 1894–95, 3,635; for 1895–96, £4,185; total expenditure on maintenance, £14,597 odd—gross total expenditure on both capital and maintenance, £31,235 3*s.* 11*d.* That amount includes a sum of £5,936 7*s.* 2*d.* in respect of mares and asses, apart from stallions, so that it would bring the stallion expenditure in round numbers down to £24,000. These mares are kept for breeding stallions to be used subsequently by the Board, and already some of their produce are serving in congested districts, and the consequence of that is that the capital expenditure of the Board on stallions is now beginning to cease.

213. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you know anything yourself as to what kind the mares are?—They are Hackney mares, in the Hackney Stud Book.

214. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You said £24,000, in round numbers, is the expenditure on stallions during what period?—From 5th August, 1891, to the 31st March of this year, the end of our financial year.

215. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you give us out of these figures the average price that was given for the Hackney stallions, and their individual cost per year?—I can give their cost per year; I can give the average price in a couple of minutes by dividing.

216. Well, you would do it much quicker than I could?—It is about £190 a piece is the average, a shade under £200.

217. Could you furnish us with the actual price that was given for each one?—Yes.

218. We would like to have that. You can give us now their yearly cost?—The average cost of a stallion is £108 a year; it is made up as follows:—The horse for eight months of the year is at the Stud Farm, Shankill.

219. Does that include all the stallions, ponies?—Ponies, Hackneys, and thoroughbreds and all. They are all at the Shankhill Stud Farm for eight months of the year, and they are in the country for four months roughly. The forage in the country costs £16 16*s.* We can do it for a guinea a week, and at the Stud Farm it costs for the eight months £23 4*s.* Groom's wages in the country costs £22 for the four months, and at the Stud Farm costs £10 for the eight months; the reason of that is that one groom at the Stud Farm looks after four, and, of course, there has to be a groom for each horse in the country. The Constabulary expenses come to £15 10*s.*

220. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Per stallion?—Yes; they are isolated. Transport expenses come to about £5 backwards and forwards; clothing comes to £3, shoeing, &c., comes to about £3, their share of rent, &c., comes to about £5, and the proportion of wear and tear and depreciation of buildings come to about £4 10*s.*, and that makes it £108.

221. Lord ASHTOWN.—Practically what you have put here under annual maintenance you divide among all the stallions; you give them their share of rent and keeping up the Stud Farm?—Yes, and depreciation on capital.

222. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you know if the Board have ever made any calculation as to the relative expenses of keeping all the stallions in one central farm during the eight months, or having several smaller establishments?—Yes; this return really gives it. You have to keep them, of course, four months in the country under both systems. You keep them twelve months under the one system and four under the other in the country. The present system costs £108; keeping them all the year round in the country we estimate would come to £177.

223. That is keeping each individual stallion in its own district?—Quite so. Forage about £54 12*s.* at present prices; grooms, £70 4*s.* at present prices; Constabulary remuneration, £25 10*s.* We think that if a horse was there all the year round, an extra £10 would be necessary to remunerate for inspection during the year; clothing and sundries, £3; shoeing and veterinary surgeon, £9; that would be heavier in the country than the town, because a veterinary surgeon would have to come from a distance; rent of country stables and repairs would come to £15, about; total, £177.

224. In making that comparison, how do you calculate the capital outlay on the farm?—A percentage on the different classes, it is made out, I think, accurately; £4 10*s.* is what we estimate for the wear and tear per stallion.

225. I mean is that comparison based on the comparative annual expense of the two systems, or have you made allowance for the capital outlay on the Stud Farm?—In the case of a horse kept at the Stud Farm, it is a percentage on the expenditure for the buildings, including depreciation. In the country we just charge rent, we don't acquire buildings there, we charge rent.

226. Lord ASHTOWN.—And in the other way you charge interest on capital?—And their proportion of rent, the rent is heavier in the country.

227. The CHAIRMAN.—What I mean is charging interest on the capital outlay, it is still in the opinion of the Board cheaper by the amount you have said to have one central establishment to send all your stallions to for the eight months than keeping them in their own localities?—Unquestionably cheaper.

228. Have you any other return that you wish to put in?—No, my lord, except the ones which I am to prepare for you.

229. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Mr. Micks, you have given us, I think, the prices charged for the services by the Congested Districts Board, can you tell me what they are roughly?—Ninety-one per cent. of the services are at 5*s.* each.

230. And I think you have also stated that the lowness of the fee is an important factor in bringing mares to the stallions?—It is, in a few districts an increase was attempted this year and it lead to a great deal of remonstrance.

231. So it is your experience that the cheaper the stallion the more work he is likely to do?—That is quite true.

232. I suppose you have no cases of absolutely free services?—No, except for prize mares, as a sort of prize.

233. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Referring to your evidence before the adjournment, Mr. Micks, it appears that you sent out queries to nineteen gentlemen who resided in congested districts?—Thirty-four.

234. Well, you got replies from nineteen?—I think we got replies from thirty-four—oh, that is the very earliest, I thought you meant the second.

235. No, I mean in the first instance and it appears that half of those gentlemen advocated Hackney stallions being used in these districts, still in 1892, which was the first year that the Board undertook to buy horses they bought seventeen horses of which one was a Cleveland Bay, one was a Barb, three were Arabs and there were twelve Hackneys, consequently the Board disregarded apparently the opinion of half the gentlemen who sent back replies and acted in accordance with the opinion of the other half, how do you account for that?—I think twelve out of seventeen is more than half.

236. Mr. WRENCH.—Would you mind giving the advice that the remaining seven gave, whether they definitely recommended any special kind or what they recommended?

237. The CHAIRMAN.—Who decided this question at the Board?—The full Board.

238. What is the full Board?—The full Board is the Chief Secretary for the time being, Mr. Wrench is specially appointed to represent agriculture and the breeding of live stock, and at that time the late Mr. Tuke, the late Mr. Cairnes, Mr. Charles Kennedy.

239. Sir T. ESMONDE.—The Bishop of Raphoe?—Yes, he was on a little after, the second year.

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240. The CHAIRMAN.—Are you in a position to say at all why the Board did anything or can you only tell us what they did?—Well, I heard most of the discussions.

241. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I was going to ask you the number of mares served by each horse, but I believe the subscriptions you say were practically full?—Most of them were, they ran from about 43 the lowest I see to something over 69 or 70, yes, 77 is the highest.

242. Lord ASHTOWN.—What constitutes being full?—Different horses have different numbers assigned to them according to age and other considerations.

243. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Then you say the total number of services as far as I take it up to 1895 was either 5,798 or 6,042, I forget which. Do you know anything about the number of foals?—Nothing.

244. Have you any return from the District Inspectors of Constabulary as to the fruitfulness of these horses, the number of foals bred by them?—I have not got any official reports about these things at all, I think the matter has been inquired into but I have not any record.

245. You said that a thoroughbred horse stood at Bantry, it was the only place the Board sent a thoroughbred horse to, I think that there are Hackney sires standing in the same district?—Not at the same time.

246. Could you tell me where was the nearest—I suppose Castletown or Schull would be the nearest place where they had a Hackney?—Yes.

247. How far is it from Bantry to Schull?—I don't know.

248. Mr. WRENCH.—Did it at all come before you that there was an application from the people of Bantry to send back a Hackney instead of the thoroughbred?—No, that did not come before me.

249. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Do you know what price "Uncle Sam" stood at?—No, or "St. Aidan," but I could ascertain it at once.

250. Lord ASHTOWN.—Did you not say that all the stallions stood, to all intents and purposes, at the same price?—Oh, the fee is the same; I thought it was the price Mr. La Touche was asking.

251. The CHAIRMAN.—You said they all stood at the same price, and the price was fixed according to the valuation of the man?—Yes. Ninety-one per cent. are 5*s*. fees.

252. Lord ASHTOWN.—A man can have a choice of a sire at that fee bringing in his mare?—Yes, but he is practically limited to the sire that is next to him.

253. The CHAIRMAN.—The fees charged for the thoroughbred stallion at Bantry would be the same to the different classes as the fees charged for Hackney stallions to similar persons in their districts?—Yes.

254. Lord ASHTOWN.—Varying according to valuation?—Yes.

255. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You are sure of that?—I am sure of it; if it was not so I would have heard it.

256. The CHAIRMAN.—It would make no difference to the man whether he sent his mare to the thoroughbred at Bantry or to the Hackney at Schull?—If he was a half way man he might do either, but I think it would depend on the police district he was in. For convenience the horses are inspected according to the police districts.

257. Lord ASHTOWN.—Do you mean the police would practically recommend a sire?—Oh, no; but it is the same as if a man was in one parish he would then get the service of the parish horse.

258. Would he be allowed to go to any other sire outside that district?—He might. I never heard the question raised, but they invariably go to the district.

259. The CHAIRMAN.—The Commission want to know whether an individual farmer has a free choice whether he would send his mare to a pony or a thoroughbred?—As far as prices are concerned, but as far as the horse is concerned in my view he has only an opportunity of sending it to the horse next him.

260. Lord RATHDONNELL.—The district to which the horses are sent—how are the horses selected to be sent into particular districts?—They were selected by the committee of the Board who dealt with the matter, they discussed with themselves "where shall we send such and such a horse, he has been two years in such a place, where shall we send him now."

261. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—It appears taking it all round to be the general practice in the Congested Districts Board to sell the produce at less than two years old?—Yes, generally, I think you may say under a year.

262. Have you any idea what becomes of these horses?—No, I cannot follow them, the dealers go and buy them, I don't know what they do with them.

263. They are not retained in the congested district?—Oh, certainly not, except some few, they are taken off in large quantities.

264. And the result of the introduction of these horses has been according to your report that the value of these young animals under two years old has improved, are you aware that stallions stood in these districts at smaller fees before the introduction of the Congested Board's horse?—I think the fees were higher but they had not to pay at the time was the only thing, they had to pay the following year.

265. And you have got no evidence as to the value of the sires displaced by the Congested Districts?—Oh, yes, I read a string of answers about these sires, that they were worthless.

266. A description of them, but not anything touching the prices paid for them?—No.

267. Well, you say of the stallions that were sold, none remain in Ireland. Then you read us some reports as to the improved price of horses, and said that many of these returns stated that prices were better now than the prices of animals got by half-bred Clydesdales. What year did these returns deal with?—They dealt with all the years, they were invited to deal with every year from the start.

268. They were sent in this year?—They were sent in this year.

269. I don't know whether they specified that the prices had been gradually increasing or that they had from the moment that the Congested Districts Board began to get foals there that the prices of foals at once became enhanced?—They became at once enhanced in some districts.

270. A gentleman writes from Bantry and says that the average price of the yearling, I think, was from £12 10*s*., an enormous price, and then you say that the number of horses in counties which contain congested districts has increased. Is there any evidence to show that they have increased in parts of these counties that are congested?—No, they are not divided, but the proportion is very much larger. For instance, in the County Mayo a portion is very largely congested, in Donegal a very large proportion is congested, and in Galway a large proportion is congested.

271. Then we come to the expenditure. The average cost of these stallions was about £190, and you say that the Board have bought ten foals at an average price of a little over £7. What became of those foals?—They are at present at the Stud Farm at Shankill.

272. How old are they?—I think the oldest is over three.

273. Have none of them been sold?—None of them sold as far as I know.

274. Do you know have any of them been offered for sale?—I don't think any have been offered for sale. I think some have been trained.

275. Are they valued in the assets of the Congested Districts Board?—Oh, they are, of course; I don't think there is anything much more than their cost price put down, until they are actually sold.

276. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you know the cost price?—Oh, yes, I gave it, £73 10*s*.

277. That was the average?—No, that was the total for ten foals.

278. Mr. La Touche.—There is an item that you have read in the annual expenditure, the inspection of mares, &c.; you said that the District Inspector inspected these mares previous to their being served?—Before they get the service order.

279. Are you sure that you are correct in saying that?—Well, that is my belief.

280. Do they inspect the mares, do you know, to judge of the fitness of the animal to be served, or to judge of the qualification that the owner of the mare has?—Well, I cannot say—but witnesses will be able to tell you that definitely.

281. You put the average cost of the stallion at £108 per annum; what annual charge do you put for proportion of capital on each horse?—On the amount spent on the horse?

282. No, but the annual depreciation in value of the horse?—I leave the cost price there, the horse may either increase in value, or depreciate in value; there is no certainty of knowing that.

283. Don't you write off something for depreciation each year?—We could not write it off, we might have to add something for its additional value.

284. My experience of horses is they don't show much increase in value?—Some of our horses have distinctly increased in value. If his produce becomes well thought of, he will increase in value at a bound.

285. Well, you don't, in fact, take anything off for that?—No.

286. Lord Ashtown.—£4 10*s.* depreciation on capital, is that depreciation on horses or on buildings?—No; it is buildings. Practically our capital expenditure has ceased now for horses; so far as Hackneys are concerned we have a stock of them ourselves coming on, we have some actually serving and some coming on.

287. Mr. La Touche.—Surely you charge interest on the capital invested in the horses, £190?—We have no such capital account under audit regulations.

288. At any rate you don't think it is necessary to charge each horse with any percentage of depreciation. Is that borne out by the result of the sale of the twelve horses that you have sold since the Board has been in existence?—On a couple of horses we got a substantial increase; on a couple we lost.

289. You sold twelve?—Did I say twelve? I think five were sold.

290. It seems to me that if you invested £16,638, that you ought to charge yourself somewhere or another with some interest on that?—I don't exactly understand in what way. Do you mean for book-keeping purposes?

291. Lord Ashtown.—No; the sinking of the capital?—If we were producing an account such as you say we would have to do so.

292. Mr. La Touche.—The total expenditure in fact since the Board has been formed on capital and maintenance of the horse breeding establishment has been £33,000?—£31,235.

293. And the result has been that 5,798 mares have been served?—Or, including the present year, over 6,000.

294. And you claim that by the action of the Congested Districts Board's horse breeding scheme you have improved the value of young horses—some people say 20 or 30 per cent., and other people say up to £2 or £3 a head. Is not that the gist of the report?—Yes; that is what it comes to.

295. Taking it at £2 a head and assuming that 6,000 services produced 5,000 foals you have increased the horseflesh in these congested districts to the extent of £10,000?—Yes, that is assuming they are all sold as foals. The amount would be greater the older the young one is when sold.

296. I take it that the enormous majority of horses are sold as foals?—Yes, the large majority, but nothing like the whole.

297. However you appear to have expended £31,235 in doing £10,000 worth of benefit?—That would be hardly it, because that £31,000 is divided into two kinds of expenditure, capital and maintenance.

298. You have invested £16,000 capital and you have expended £14,000 in maintenance?—Yes.

299. And the benefit that has accrued by this expenditure appears to amount to about £10,000?—I should not say that, I should say that would be a very low estimate indeed.

300. Do you think then that the horses in these districts have improved to a larger extent than £2 a head?—I should say very much larger taking the whole thing, taking the sales at all the different ages that they are sold.

301. Of course if this had been in a country where horses are maintained for the use or amusement or recreation of the people who live in it you would have made a permanent improvement, but these congested districts appear to be places in which horses are not kept?—Fillies are kept for breeding in a very large number of cases.

302. Your report tended to prove that it had not tended to keep the mares in the country?—I think the evidence is that a very large number of the fillies are kept for breeding.

303. I took a note when you were reading out the evidence that the result of the lowness of fees and the improved value of the horse had not tended to induce the farmers to keep their mares?—That is not my impression of the evidence.

304. Lord Ashtown.—As far as I remember he said that in a large number of cases people had sold who ought to have kept?—Yes.

305. Mr. La Touche.—As a matter of fact the great majority of horses that are bred there leave the country when they are a year or two old?—Yes, the great majority do; each of these men as a rule keep a mare for doing their work.

306. Lord Ashtown.—What you want to get at is whether they sell the mare and keep the filly?—There is a tendency in that direction, and everything the Board can do to bring it in that direction they are doing, giving prizes for fillies kept in the country.

307. Mr. La Touche.—I conclude this item for cost of inspection includes prizes for mares and foals and the inducements the Board offers?—No, there is a further sum of £639 for local shows, prizes at local shows, and not merely prizes, but expenses in connection with local shows.

308. Is that included in the £14,597?—It is not, it was omitted. I did not observe it until now, it is an extra item of £639.

309. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—Mr. Micks, you mentioned, or rather in your report there is an item of remuneration to the police of £1,332 for four years?—Yes.

310. A large item, can you give us any details of that?—The police officer is in charge of the horse from the time it goes down to the station in the country, he makes all the arrangements for the forage, he has constant inspection of the horse, he inspects the mares who are brought to the horse, except where there is a veterinary surgeon employed, there is a great deal of writing up and keeping service books and matters of that sort. They are done by the sergeant or the officer's clerk, and that over these districts there are a large number of District Inspectors, as many as there are horses in fact, and these officers and men get some slight remuneration. That is what it comes to, it comes to about £350 a year.

311. They send you in a return of these horses and a return of the mares that go to them?—Yes, and keep the service book, and give the orders to the people who come and inspect the mares.

312. And practically select the mares who are allowed to go to the horse?—Well, report on the mares, yes, they practically select them, I suppose.

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313. Mr. La Touche.—I suppose to have these services efficiently carried out by any other body would cost a great deal more money?—It would, I think, it is cheap for the work they do, they have a great amount of correspondence and business to do.

314. The Chairman.—But the value of the service the police render you does not appear in your accounts, there is a certain sum, but that does not represent the value of the work they do for you?—That represents what they get for it.

315. But not the full amount of the value they give you?—No, but we make an acknowledgement to them in our report every year.

316. And if you had not the service of the police you would have to pay a great deal more for the same service?—I think we would.

317. I think you said that the bulk of the produce of your stallions was sold under one year old?—Yes.

318. And that the majority of them were not kept in the district?—Yes.

319. I think you said you did not know where they went to?—I have heard of buyers having them in different other parts of Ireland.

320. Do you know at all who buys them?—Dealers I believe, I don't know positively.

321. Then, according to you, the bulk of the produce of these Hackney stallions is distributed all over Ireland?—I cannot follow the distribution.

322. At any rate it does not remain in the districts?—Not much of it.

323. At the same time the number of horses in the congested districts is increasing very rapidly?—It is.

324. And at the same time all the produce of your stallions are sold under a year old?—Yes.

325. And not sold in the district, how do you account for the increase?—It is possible that these young fillies being kept may account to a large extent for it.

326. Sir W. Gilbey.—You have no actual figures of the number sold have you?—No, we have not.

327. Lord Rathdonnell.—Can you tell the increase?—Yes.

328. The Chairman.—There has been a large increase according to what we have in evidence in the counties which contain congested districts?—Yes.

329. And a decrease in the counties in Ireland which do not contain congested districts, is not that so?—That is so. In 8 counties they have increased, counties in which there are congested districts, they have increased in Kerry by 512, in Galway by 173, in Leitrim by 123, in Mayo by 448, in Roscommon by 251, in Sligo by 209, and in Donegal by 750, a total increase of 2,463.

330. Mr. Wrench.—Might not the explanation of that be that horse breeding in the congested districts was paying better and that it was worse in other parts of the country?—That occurs to one as a possible explanation of it, I have not followed it up, I merely take the figures and give them to the Commission.

331. The Chairman.—I suppose you never entered into any calculation as to what fees you would have to charge if this was a private business?—No.

332. Would you be able to give us any idea, the fees would be your only asset, your only property and an occasional sale?—I have not an idea really.

333. You have given us the capital expenditure and the annual expenses, can you give us what the annual receipts amount to?—I can in a very few minutes, there are 5,191 at 5*s*., 197 at 10*s*., and 288 at £1 and over, about £2,700.

334. I think you said there was a tendency on the part of the occupiers to sell their mares, and that the Board were trying to devise means of counteracting that?—The Board are encouraging them to keep the fillies to breed out of.

335. How do they encourage them?—They give prizes for fillies kept in the country, they brand the fillies as prize winners at the Show, and if that filly is produced in the subsequent year they give a production prize for it.

336. Have their efforts been successful?—I think there are being higher payments under it.

337. Mr. La Touche.—I have seen a great many of these mares, but I never saw a filly branded, are you sure they go on branding fillies?—Mr. Wrench could answer that.

338. Speaking roughly, you say the receipts from fees amounted to £2,700, while the expenditure on maintenance was £14,597, so as a trading concern the Congested Districts Board seems to have sustained a dead loss of £11,897 on the capital of £16,638?—If you put even your sum of £10,000 on to that that would suffice us.

Mr. La Touche.—Yes, as a philanthropic concern, but not as a trading concern.

Joseph R. O'Reilly, D.L., examined.

Joseph R O'Reilly, D.L.

339. The Chairman.—You are a member of the Council of the Irish Harness Horse Society?—Yes, my lord.

340. And of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes.

341. How long have you been a member of the Harness Horse Society?—Since its foundation.

342. When was its foundation?—It was founded in the spring of 1895.

343. And with what object?—Well, the objects were to encourage the breeding of harness horses in districts where it did not interfere with hunter breeding. Its objects were to encourage generally the breeding of harness horses and to assist in filling classes of the Royal Dublin Society, the entries had fallen off very much in 1894 in the harness classes, 40 per cent. of a falling off, and there was a disappointment felt by some members at the action of the Horse Show Committee of the Dublin Society in throwing out the Hackney classes for stallions from the prize list of 1895, particularly as that class had been very well supported and well spoken of by the Judges that had come over. In their report to the Society they had congratulated the Society on introducing that breed of horses into the country. Then again there was a feeling amongst us interested in harness horse breeding that the Royal Dublin Society and other agricultural associations gave little encouragement to Irish breeders in the harness direction, that a valuable industry might suffer unless some society was formed to encourage Irish breeders, All the prizes at the Royal Dublin Society were being carried off by English exhibitors and English breeders, and our society was formed to assist the Royal Dublin Society and other associations in furthering the interests of Irish breeders of harness horses.

344. Your object was to encourage generally the breeding of harness horses in Ireland?—Yes.

345. But as I understand merely in such districts as would not interfere with hunter breeding?—Yes.

346. Who were the original promoters of the society?—Mr. Thomas Talbot Power, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Dames Longworth, Lord Bellew, Lord Ashtown, Colonel Lindsay Gore, and Sir Douglas Brooke, Mr. Wrench, and myself I think were the first promoters.

347. Were there any societies in existence at the time of your foundation dealing with the subject?—Not specially for harness purposes, the only extent that other societies recognised it as such is that the Royal Dublin Society used to give open classes for harness horses, but they did not give special classes, they failed to recognise the importance of establishing special classes for stallions, thoroughbred or otherwise with action best suited for harness purposes and for getting harness horses, nor did they give us classes for mares with action specially suited for harness purposes.

348. Have you got a prospectus of the society?—Yes (produced).

349. Perhaps you better read it?

Witness (reading).—"Objects of the society to promote and encourage the breeding of harness horses, with action, in Ireland. To publish for the information of breeders, a list of any stallions in Ireland specially suitable for that purpose. To publish for the information of buyers a list of breeders of such harness horses. Gradually to form a register of mares specially suitable for breeding harness horses. And generally to promote the exhibition of harness horses at agricultural shows and elsewhere. To attract public attention to this important subject, and to spread knowledge of the principles upon which better harness horses may be bred. The society has been formed to foster and stimulate a trade which it is believed will prove profitable in Ireland. There is a constant demand in England and Scotland for harness horses with action, and these are now largely supplied by foreign breeders. Many of them are bred out of foreign native mares by stallions imported from England. There is no reason why Ireland should not produce such animals better than they can be produced in any other country, without in any way interfering with the breeding of hunters—especially as many of the mares are too light and weedy to be mated with a thoroughbred horse. "The Irish Harness Horse Society agrees that continued efforts should be made in Ireland towards the improvement of Hunters, in the production of which this country stands unrivalled, and for which she has acquired her reputation as a Horse-breeding country. At the same time it is submitted that the interests of the farming classes ought to be taken into consideration, and every opportunity afforded them of making Horse-breeding more profitable. There is little doubt that a large class exists who would find a ready sale for a shapely Harness Horse with action, that could be worked at an early age on the land. There is plenty of room in Ireland for the production of both Harness Horses and Hunters, and there is no reason why it should not excel in both departments. The Irish Harness Horse Society further submits that in view of the continued depressed condition of agriculture, and the improbability of there being any important and early recovery in prices of ordinary agricultural produce, a favourable opportunity now offers for placing before the farming classes of Ireland, means and facilities by which they may be encouraged and enabled to effect a decided improvement in a branch of their business, hitherto either comparatively neglected or imperfectively carried out. It is not suggested that a Hunter can be produced by using a Hackney Sire, the Hackney being purely a Road and Harness horse, but this should not preclude or prevent the breeding of horses specially adapted to harness or roadster purposes by means similar to and co-existent with those which have been successfully employed for the improvement of Hunters by the Royal Dublin Society under their Horse-breeding scheme. In the Harness classes at the Horse Show of the Royal Dublin Society, the prizes are too often carried off by English exhibitors, or with horses bred in England. *This ought not to be*, and without in any way interfering with the Hunter and the Thoroughbred, or confining the breeding of Harness Horses to Hackney Sires, it is submitted that more encouragement should be given to the breeding of high class Harness Horses in Ireland, and more facilities afforded to persons favourably situated for the production of such animals in this country."

350. What action has the Society taken to carry out its objects?—Well, up to the present, the Society has confined itself chiefly to promoting exhibitions of harness horses bred in Ireland at the Royal Dublin Society and other agricultural shows, and also to the organizing meets of coaches and fashionable equipages in the Park, and at the Show, to attract public attention to the importance of this industry. In co-operation, too, with the Royal Dublin Society, we introduced two new classes at the August Show of 1895 and 1896, and for each class we provided the prize money. In Class A for harness horses shown in harness, not exceeding six years old, bred in Ireland, and exhibited by residents in Ireland, we gave £25. And for Class B, young horses suitable for harness, not exceeding four years old, shown in hand, and bred in Ireland, and exhibited by a resident in Ireland, we gave £18 and the Society's silver medal to the first prize winners in both these classes. And also with the concurrence of the Royal Dublin Society, we organized a meet of coaches at the August Show, and in the absence of a prize list, we gave handsome silver-mounted whips to the driver of each of those coaches, and the parade formed a leading feature of the Show. To the North-East Agricultural Show at Belfast we gave a cup, value 10 guineas, and a silver medal for young horses suitable for harness, not exceeding four years old, bred in Ireland, and exhibited by residents in Ireland. At the Rathdown Agricultural Society's Show, we gave a cup, value £5, for the best young horse bred in Ireland, suitable for harness, under four years old, open to all classes in the Show. At the Galway Show we gave a silver cup, value £5, for young horse, three to four years old, and under fifteen hands high, with style and action, suitable for harness, to be shown in harness. At the Hollymount Show we gave a cup valued £5, or if preferred, a silver medal and £5 for the best Hackney or harness horse bred in Ireland. For the Ballinasloe Agricultural Society we gave a silver cup for the best young horse not exceeding four years old, with style and action, suitable for harness, bred in Ireland. And to the Fermanagh Agricultural Show we gave a silver medal. I think that was about all we were able to manage with the funds at our disposal.

351. Have your efforts been well seconded throughout the country—have you received good support?—Yes; we have received from those interested in breeding harness horses donations of £100 towards the objects of our society, and also the classes that we gave prizes to in the country shows were all well supported, and the secretaries wrote up strong letters to our secretary asking us to continue our support and to go on similar lines. The entries also at the Royal Dublin Society's Show—which had fallen, as I said, about 40 per cent.—they rose in 1895 62 per cent. over 1894, and in 1896—this last year's show—they rose 78 per cent. over 1894.

352. Do you consider the breeding of harness horses an important industry in the country?—Yes; I think it is a very important industry. Dealers come over here from the other side to look for harness horses, and they say they can never get them. I know that there is a great demand for horses with action. I think there is a greater feeling now for getting horses with style and action; it is more looked for now than some years ago. I know an Irish dealer myself who has got an order for eighty harness horses at £100 each, and finds it very hard to get them.

353. Where are they mostly produced?—I think all over Ireland. I don't know that there is any special part, except the north of Ireland has got a greater name for harness breeding than any other I know of. The fair of Moy, in Tyrone, is a great fair for dealers to go to looking for harness horses more than anything else.

354. You don't think any particular part of the country is more suitable for breeding this class of horses than any other?—No; I could not say so, except I think that where hunters are not bred harness horses might be very well developed and bred.

355. Where are the districts where hunters are not bred?—Chiefly in the north, there is very little hunting in the north. They encourage the harness class more in the North East Agricultural Society's

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Show in Belfast. They have more go for harness there than in any other part of the country.

356. And you think the industry is capable of being largely increased?—I think so. I think there is a great demand for good harness horses, and I don't see why it should not be increased in those districts where there is scope for them, and where people have a trade in it I think they ought to be encouraged as well as other breeds.

357. How are they bred, these harness horses in the north?—Mostly from thoroughbred horses, some from Hackneys.

358. Do you think the supply of stallions is sufficient and suitable?—No, I think the stallions could be improved very much. We want more action in the thoroughbred horse, we want more bone and action for harness, in whatever breed of horse you use we require action. Action is essential in harness.

359. Your society has not done anything towards meeting that?—We have not had funds at our disposal, but you may note that it is in our prospectus. We fully intend to carry out, if we have funds enough, a system of registration of stallions, thoroughbred, or any other pure breed with action and bone and suitability for getting harness horses, and assisting breeders by such a registration of sound horses and also of mares. It was our intention also to have classes for mares, and to work more or less similarly to those the Royal Dublin Society had instituted for hunters in these districts.

360. To have mares registered?—Not a registration of mares, but to have shows of mares suitable for harness in these districts where harness horses were bred without interfering with hunter breeding in the least, and if the mares were suitable, if we had money at our disposal, or if there was a government grant for that purpose that these mares that were suitable for harness should get nominations to stallions on the register, leaving the breeder his own choice of what stallion he might go to.

361. Giving him a nomination free?—Not necessarily free but at a value for so much, leaving him free to choose his own sire.

362. Then you don't, I understand, recommend any particular breed of stallion over another?—No, we have an open policy as regards the breed of stallions. What we do recommend is that they should have action, which is essential for harness, and also that they should be pure-bred of their own class—that is pedigree bred and sound.

363. Any other information you wish to lay before the Commission?—I don't think so, my lord. Except I think that on the broad principle, without interfering with the hunter breeding industry, harness horse breeding has claims for encouragement in those districts where the particular trade is carried on and found more profitable than hunter breeding. So many more men want a good harness horse for twelve months in the year to the one that wants a hunter for six months in the year, I think on the broad principle that the wants of the majority should have equal if not greater claims to encouragement than the wants of the minority.

364. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Have you any idea which is the larger trade in Ireland: the breeding of the hunting horse or of the harness horse?—Oh, the hunting horse, there is no doubt about it.

365. Much larger?—Oh, much larger.

366. You could not give any figures?—I could not give any figures, but I should say the exportation of horses is so great that it is chiefly for hunters they are exported so much, nearly all the hunts in England are horsed by hunters from this country.

367. The CHAIRMAN.—Have you any figures you could give the Commission as to the number of harness horses that are exported?—I have not, it would be very hard to give that, they go away so young from this country before they are broken for harness, and may be turned to hunting or harness purposes after they leave the country. The exportation of horses has increased immensely, it reaches 34,000 a year, or 700 a week.

368. How do you obtain funds?—Donations from those interested in breeding, and also subscriptions from the members, annual subscriptions, but we are sadly in want of funds to work what our original programme intended; we should look for some government assistance to do all we should wish.

369. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What are the mares that you look on as harness breeding mares?—Mares with action essentially.

370. Yes, but how are they bred?—Well, they may be bred by thoroughbred horses, if they show sufficient blood and quality with action for harness they may be mated according to the opinions of the breeder; if he thinks they will mate better with a thoroughbred horse he will go to the thoroughbred horse if his mares want quality.

371. I am not talking of the horse now, what are the mare's breedings?—They are mostly from thoroughbreds, the sire thoroughbred on one side.

372. Any admixture of Cleveland or anything of that kind?—I don't think there is any Cleveland in this country at all.

373. Not in the North of Ireland?—Not that I am aware of, there is some cart blood mixed, no doubt, what we call cart blood.

374. Agricultural?—Yes, agricultural horses.

375. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Can you say why it is that you think that there are more hunters sold than harness horses, do you know any reason why the trade should be bigger?—I think there are more foreign dealers coming over looking for hunters, at the same time there are a great many looking for harness horses, but the majority are looking for hunters.

376. Have you any idea why they come more for hunters?—Because this country is so specially adapted for breeding hunters, it is the greatest industry of the country.

377. Lord RATHDONNELL.—There is one remark you made, you said there was no class in the Royal Dublin Society's list for harness horse sires?—No, no special class for harness horse sires, there is a class for sires calculated to get hunters or harness horses.

378. I think so?—Decidedly, but nothing special for harness horses.

379. But still it is open to harness horses?—Indirectly.

380. Directly I think?—Well, breeders of harness horses look upon action as the essential attribute of the harness horse and of the sire that is calculated to get them, and we don't look for that in the hunter, we don't look for harness action when we want to breed a hunter.

381. Well, to breed a harness horse or a hunter you must breed for action?—For a hunter certain action, but it is not the same action as you want in a harness horse.

382. Do you mean you prefer up and down action?—Not necessarily, but you want them to use their shoulders well and step up with style, and carry their head and tail erect.

383. You yourself I fancy have bred a great many horses?—I have bred a great many horses, both thoroughbreds and others.

384. What sires have you used as a rule?—I have used altogether thoroughbred sires for hunting purposes, I have used Hackney lately on some mares and I have been very successful so far. I have bred the first prize winner in the harness class at the ast Dublin Show. I never was able to come into the ribbons in this class in the Dublin Show until I had put my mare to a Hackney sire, and I got first prize this last Show with the result of the produce, four years old.

385. You also, I think, said that there was room for every kind—well all kinds—of harness horse

breeding in Ireland, as well as breeding the hunter?—Yes.

386. Now, do you think that the increase of Hackney mares will do any harm in Ireland if they spread from the districts where they are at present to districts like Meath and the best horse breeding districts of Ireland?—I don't think there is any danger of that. I think that is a sentimental grievance. I don't think you will find where Hackneys at present are serving that there is the slightest danger of the class of mares that are going to these Hackneys being taken up by breeders of hunters. They have not got the points of the hunter, and I think they will be merely retained for harness breeding.

387. You think they will remain in the districts where they happen to be bred?—I do; they won't go into the hands of breeders of hunters, because I don't think any breeder of a hunter would like to have any of the Hackney blood in his mares.

388. Have you ever heard it said that the young horses, that is the six and eight months foals and the yearlings, from say the congested districts counties, are sold at that age?—Yes; I have certainly heard that they were sold.

389. Did you ever find out what way they went?—No; I have no means of telling you that.

390. I fancy they must travel east—must they not?—I could not tell you; I have no idea.

391. If there happen to be fillies amongst those that are sold—they cannot only keep the fillies in those districts, some of the females must go from there—what becomes of them?—But I take it that the mares that would be sired by these Hackney sires in the congested districts would be a class of mare that would be a long way off the dam of a good hunter, and it would be a long time before the breeder of a hunter would take her into his stud to breed a hunter from.

392. Then you think everybody that buys young stock of that sort is not likely to put the mare to a horse if it is not a well shaped one?—No, I don't think they would put it to a horse to breed a hunter, they might to a harness horse.

393. You don't think a small farmer would if he had such a mare?—I don't think so.

394. Mr. CAREW.—You agree that the breeding of hunters is by far the most important branch of the horse breeding industry in Ireland?—I think so.

395. And you would not care to interfere with it?—No, far from it.

396. How would you arrange the operations of your society so as not to interfere with the breeding of hunters?—I should have a special registration of horses suitable for breeding harness horses with action, and I think if there were shows held in those districts where the harness industry should be encouraged, and shows of mares held there, I think if a committee were to select the mares that were suitable for harness, and they had funds at their disposal to give these mares nominations, that is subscriptions to use with harness sires, then they could be put to any breed of sire that is on the registry of the Harness Society.

397. Do you think there would be danger of infecting hunting breeding?—I do not think so. I don't think the blood of the Hackney is at all inferior. I should not care for it in a hunter in any way; but I don't think there is any inferior comparison with Irish cart-horse blood or Shire or Clydesdale or any of this cart blood, and hunting mares have run the same risk in this country of being infected with that blood as they would with the Hackney.

398. What do you mean by the Irish carthorse?—Very often they term the agricultural horses that are used by small farmers on their farms carthorses.

399. You have no idea how they are bred?—No. There is a great deal of thoroughbred blood in them; they are smart horses.

400. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You said you thought your society would do a great deal of good in certain districts in Ireland which were not suitable for the breeding of hunters?—Yes.

401. And in the prospectus of your society you say there is no reason why Ireland should not produce animals that are better than could be produced in any other country without in any way interfering with the breeding of hunters, are we to infer that if you think the operations of your society were carried on in a county where hunters were bred it might possibly interfere with the breeding of hunters?—I don't think so.

402. Why did you particularly specify to the Chairman those districts in the north of Ireland?—I say those are the districts where the breeding of harness horses is more extensively carried on; the others are in conjunction with hunter breeding. In the north they breed very much for harness purposes, and no other; in the south and in the midland counties they breed altogether nearly for hunters.

403. Then, in the first paragraph of the objects of the society, "especially as many of the mares are too light and weedy to be mated with a thoroughbred horse." Is not that rather wholesale condemnation of the thoroughbred horse; it must be within your recollection you have seen thoroughbred horses with as much bone as any other horse?—Yes; but if you have a mare that is weedy you cannot put a thoroughbred on to her again, or the result will be a lack of bone and substance.

404. If the thoroughbred horse you put on her has more bone and substance than any other horse you would not be likely to get a weedier animal than from any other horse?—If he had more bone and substance than any other horse you would not, but some of the thoroughbreds in the country have not as much bone and substance as is desirable for breeding.

405. Some of them?—A great many of them.

406. Then this ought to read "especially as many of the mares are so light and weedy to be mated with a light and weedy thoroughbred horse"?—We want both bone and substance and action, for harness, as much thoroughbred blood as you can get, but get the action you must.

407. Supposing you have the action and the bone and substance in the thoroughbred horse would you prefer him to any other breed of horse?—I would decidedly.

408. I suppose you admit that you have seen thoroughbred horses with as much bone and action as required?—I have seen them but they are very scarce.

409. Well you say that a harness horse is very hard to get, but it appears from some information that I received, I think two years ago, in connection with the Royal Dublin Society, that the principal dealers in England get their best carriage horses in Ireland, at least so they say at any rate. And those dealers maintain that the horses they have found most suitable for their purpose were got by thoroughbred horses and were bred in the south of Ireland, not the north of Ireland. And I also take it that you particularly specified that you thought the breeding of good harness horses should be encouraged, and you say that even in the north good harness horses are chiefly bred by thoroughbreds and some by Hackneys, have you any practical experience of which are the most valuable, they are sold as colts I suppose?—If the produce show action, style, and quality it would make no difference whether they are by a thoroughbred or a Hackney sire.

410. You think not?—No, I have seen Hackney sires' produce in harness fetch more at the Dublin shows. I can give you an instance, at the last show a Hackney horse who got the first prize and champion cup was sold for £300 to a Paris banker.

411. Mr. CAREW.—That is exceptional?—Well, the year before the horse that got first prize was sold for £200, by the same sire out of the same mare, he also was by a Hackney sire out of a mare bought in Dublin.

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412. How was the mare bred?—You could not say, it is very hard to trace the pedigree of any mare in Ireland.

413. Mr. La Touche.—Do you think the ordinary mare in the country is calculated to produce a good carriage horse?—Yes, if she has action she is, but without action she is not.

414. Do you think action is one of the qualities of the ordinary mare?—I think the present style of the day is for action in harness.

415. Do you think action is one of the attributes of the ordinary mare of the country?—No, not harness action.

416. Then I may take it you would hold that the ordinary mare of the country is not at present adapted to breed good harness horses?—Not the general run of them, no, not unless the sire has exceptionally good action, you may get it then.

417. I suppose while the price of a very tip-top harness horse is likely always to keep up, the price of an inferior harness horse is very likely to fall?—Yes, I should say so.

418. By the introduction of bicycles and motor carriages. Do you really think the majority of those horses that are sold in Ireland are hunters?—Yes, decidedly.

419. Would you say two-thirds?—I should say more —that are exported, I mean.

420. You said there are 33,000 horses exported from Ireland every year, do you mean to say there are 20,000 hunters sent out of Ireland every year?—I would not be surprised.

421. I think you would probably find that the Messrs. Widger, of Waterford, are the largest exporters of horses from Ireland, and I should think a very small proportion of the horses they send are hunters, or intended for hunters?—I think they are very large buyers of horses of all sorts. It is very hard to trace a horse when he leaves these shores—what he is to be used for—but I know all the best hunters in England are Irish-bred.

422. I cannot imagine that 20,000 hunters a year are sold out of Ireland?—That may be a little over the mark.

423. You said you bred the first prize winner in the Harness class at the Dublin Show last year —Yes.

424. And it was by a Hackney?—Yes

425. How old was it?—Four years old.

426. Had you had the dam any time?—Yes, I have had the dam for a long time, six or seven years.

427. How was she bred?—I bought her in Ireland; I don't know her pedigree, never could trace it; she got first prize herself in the Harness class in the Dublin Show.

428. As a brood mare?—As a harness mare.

429. Do you think she was an Irish mare, or an English mare, or a Hackney mare?—I could not say, it is very hard.

430. Had she bred anything for you before?—This was her first foal, this one that got the first prize.

431. Of course you put her to horse since then?—I have.

432. Did you use the same sire? No, I have not used it the last two years; I put her to my own sire. I keep an American trotting-horse, a standard American trotting-horse, and I have put her to him for the last two years.

433. Does your Harness Horse Society propose to introduce stallions into Ireland at all for the purpose of breeding?—Our Society would like to see horses introduced into Ireland with action calculated to get harness horses, no doubt, but we have no funds at our disposal.

434. Are you disposed to look favourably on this American horse of yours; have you seen his stock?—Yes; they promise very well indeed, but they are too young yet to form any opinion.

435. Mr. Wrench.—You have never made any calculations, Mr. O'Reilly, to see exactly what the probable requirements of all the different hunts of the United Kingdom would be so as to test what really the hunting trade would be, have you?—Well, I was doing that last night. I got the return in last week's *Field*. It gave the different hunts in England, foxhounds, staghounds, and harriers, and I totted them all up, and made them 360 hunts.

436. And how many horses per hunt did you allow for replacing horses sold?—Well, I did not go in very closely to the whole thing, but I was doing it in a rough way.

437. I only wanted to arrive at some point in reference to Mr. La Touche's question as to your evidence that there are 20,000 hunters sold from Ireland?—If there are 300 hunts you can take an average of 100 horses then,

438. And in that way you arrive at the 20,000?—Yes.

439. I think you had a good deal to say to the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes.

440. And have been present at all their shows?—I have.

441. Have you any particulars at all as to how the horses were bred that have generally won the prizes for harness in the Dublin Show?—Yes; they were nearly all bred, as far as I could see, the majority at any rate, by Hackney sires. As I said regarding the Irish Harness Horse Society, I mentioned that all the prizes were going to England, and the horses that came over from England were invariably bred by Hackney sires. I don't think you can point to anyone by a Queen's premium sire that came over here in the harness classes.

442. With regard to thoroughbreds I think you mentioned that you were against crossing thoroughbreds with weedy mares, have you any information as to the thoroughbreds in the country, whether they are sound or the reverse?—I know the Dublin Society are doing the utmost to extinguish the unsound sire by the registration system, and I think they are gaining ground every day in that direction. I think the registration scheme of the Dublin Society is a very fine scheme. It is better than any stud book, because the stud book don't require soundness, but the Dublin Society requires soundness before they register the sire.

443. Would you be inclined to increase that registration and make it include mares or not?—No, I would not go so far as that, I don't know on what foundation you could start a registration of mares in Ireland.

444. Then you think all the registration that can be attempted is at present the registration the Royal Dublin Society carry out?—I think it can be further developed in the registration of stallions carried on to a larger extent and supplemented by the importation of stallions or by assisting private enterprise in the purchase of stallions of the right stamp.

445. In your evidence I think you said you dislike the half-bred sire?—I do immensely, I should not have anything to say to him either for harness or hunter breeding.

446. Why?—Because he is neither one thing or the other, and you can never rely on his get, he may throw back to the bad side instead of the good side.

447. Then you would not approve of any suggestion to register half-bred sires?—No, I would be dead against registering half-bred sires.

448. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—What do you mean by half-bred exactly?—When I say half-bred I mean what they call hunter-bred in this country, that is by a thoroughbred stallion and a dam not in the stud book.

449. Still a well bred one?—Yes.

450. Lord Ashtown.—In fact a horse three-quarter blood?—Yes.

451. Sir W. Gilbey.—I believe you are interested in the improvement of the breed of horses generally

in Ireland. You are on the Council of the Royal Dublin Society, and you also support this Harness Society ?—Yes.

452. You have no prejudice as to the breed, because I think you said you were in favour of a pure breed, and you keep a stallion yourself American bred ?—Yes.

453. With regard to the breed of mares that are shown in the Dublin Show, which I take an interest in, and have for many years been a visitor at, I notice the "breeding unknown" in so many cases, even when there are prizes given for brood mares. How do you account for that ? They know the breeder, but they don't know the sire or the dam ?—As a rule an inferior horse in the country has no pedigree, but a horse that has distinguished himself has generally got a very fine pedigree. I think really the answer to the question is that horses are sold when they are young and change hands so very frequently, and if a man wants to sell his horse he always picks out the sire that has the best name in his district, and he gives it to his purchase straight off, and enters it in his books even to show the buyer that it is by so and so, but there is no reliable way of coming at it.

454. But there would not be much difficulty in getting that information ?—I think there is immense difficulty.

455. If the exhibitor is known and the breeder why should they not know the name of the sire and the dam ?—Yes, but they keep the name of the breeder very dark, and dealers don't want to have it known. There are spotters all over the country for good horses, and they keep it dark where they get those good horses.

456. You know what an injurious effect that has on many Irish bred horses from the fact that the English dealers, I am speaking of stables in London which I know, if they have a good horse, he is an Irish horse, but you never get any particulars whether he is really Irish or not, and if he turns out a bad soft horse it goes against him, it is against Ireland ? —It is a hardship, but I don't see how it can be altered, it is a difficult question, it certainly does tell against the Irish horse.

457. Mr. CAREW.—You say you are totally opposed to half-breds ?—Yes, for getting hunters or harness horses, I think they ought to be pedigreed according to their own breed.

458. Are not the best hunters got from half-bred mares with thoroughbred sires ?—Yes.

459. Then how do you propose to maintain, if you are totally opposed to half-breds, how do you propose to maintain the half-bred mares, they must die out in time, become too fine ?—Not by changing your strain of blood, and mating them with another strain, you get it back very much in bone.

460. How do you mean by changing the strain, from Hackney to thoroughbred or from thoroughbred to Hackney ?—Not necessarily, but I don't know if you were breeding a harness horse it would do any harm.

461. But I am talking of hunters, you admit that the best hunters are from half-bred mares with thoroughbred sires, if you are totally opposed to half-breds how would you keep up the strain of half-bred mares, you would eradicate them in time by constant mating with thoroughbreds, they would become too fine and lose bone and substance ?—It is going on for generations in the race-horse, and the race-horse has not degenerated, it has rather improved.

462. They have not deteriorated for racing purposes ?—No, but they have been got from thorough breds on both sides there.

463. You want something besides racing in a hunter ?—Yes, you do. But I don't think there would be any fear if you go from one thoroughbred strain to another, you can very often get back more bone if you keep your sires up to the mark, the sires must have bone. Keep the biggest and best mares and the mares with the best bone and continue breeding with a throughbred horse you will get bone.

464. But if you go on breeding from a thoroughbred sire won't the produce of the mare become a racer in the end, and nothing more, you destroy the hunter breed ?—I cannot see that it would come to that, we don't find in racing that we have lost size or substance in the racehorse, in fact I think the racehorse has increased in size and substance.

465. Lord ASHTOWN.—Suppose you had a half-bred mare and put her to a thoroughbred horse you would get a light filly, would you cross that filly with a half-bred horse ?—I would not like to establish that, it may be done successfully, but I would not like to establish that theory. I think it is done very often successfully, but as I said before it may be the reverse, it may throw back to the wrong side.

466. Would you object to breed a hunter from a mare that was a light filly with three or four crosses of blood put to a half-bred horse ?—I would not object if the result was satisfactory, but I should not like to try it.

467. Mr. WRENCH.—I see from your evidence here that you refer to the different parts of Dublin for different systems of breeding, do you think that could be carried out that in one district you could breed a heavy horse, in another hunters, and in another harness horses ?—That refers to the county Dublin, there is a great deal of carthorse breeding in the north side of Dublin, and on the south side it is not suited for breeding hunters and they breed light harness horses.

468. What I mean is do you think these different systems of breeding can be carried on without interfering with each other ?—I think so, decidedly, I don't see any danger in the least.

469. Do you think that rests with the breeders that they are able to take care of themselves if they like to do so ?—I think so, the breeder ought to be the best judge of what he is going to do, if he has to mould a horse to satisfy the buyer he has to use his brains, he is the man that would form the best opinion of how that is to be brought about, not the buyer. I don't think the buyer's opinion is worth anything, it is the breeder's opinion that is worth a lot, he has to mould the animal and ought to know the best means to attain his object.

470. As a rule you think the pedigrees of horses that are entered at the Dublin Show and also shown in the catalogue are hardly to be trusted ?—I think so decidedly, I think you can never trust them unless you know the breeder.

471. You cannot suggest any remedy ? Would you prevent a man from entering his horse and giving it a pedigree where he did not know the breeder ?—I think you would spoil your show or at least you would spoil your entries, it would not look well in your show to see them all unpedigreed.

472. You think it is better to have a lot of plausible pedigrees than no pedigrees at all ?—I think it would affect your entries immensely if you were obliged to verify all the breeding of the horses entered, I think it would be very hard to carry it out.

473. Lord ASHTOWN.—What would you say to not putting the pedigree in the catalogue if the breeder was not known ?—I think it would look very bad.

474. If they could not certify to the breeder why put the pedigree down at all ?—You could have that no doubt, but I think a great many would continue to falsify pedigrees unless you obliged them to verify them and that would be a very hard thing to do.

475. Sir W. GILBEY.—Is there any suggestion as to how it could be got over or obviated or improved by the Dublin Society, supposing there was a duplicate class, one in which a man need give no information as to breeding and another class that he could only enter where he could authenticate the breeding of the animal, has it ever been suggested or discussed. I know the show for many years, I come over and look at the prize sheet, I am only a type of 99 out of 100, you

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see the breeder without the pedigree or the pedigree without the breeder, what reliance is there on that, it goes for nothing. Would it not be possible to leave it out?—I don't think it would further the interests of the show to leave it out, it may be the best for buyers.

476. Mr. WRENCH.—Are you aware whether many American horses are being imported into Ireland at present?—There are a good many American horses unfortunately, I think, being imported. I saw one shipload when I was in Belfast. I saw a shipload landed the day I arrived there. I also saw some sold in Dublin.

477. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What class of horses?—A very poor class of horses.

478. Harness horses?—They were broken to harness; flat-sided animals, very poor; sold for very small money, and certainly were no advantage coming into this country, rather the reverse.

479. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Many mares among them?—A good many amongst the lot I saw in Belfast.

480. Mr. WRENCH.—Were they sold in Belfast?—Yes, I waited for the auction; they brought from £7 up to £13 or £14; the best mare in the whole lot fetched £30.

481. You don't know whether there were any American horses shown in the Dublin Show?—There were some in the Fast Trotting class.

482. You don't know whether there were any in the Hunters' class?—No; I don't think so.

483. The CHAIRMAN.—About your own society, I gather from you that your general opinion, the opinion of your society, is that the breeding of hunters is and will remain the principal part of the horse-breeding industry of Ireland, taking it as a whole?—Certainly.

484. But certain districts, especially in the North, are more suited for breeding harness horses?—Yes, where there is no hunting, and no markets for hunters.

485. As you say the fashion being for action, I should like to know, in your opinion, whether that action is not better obtained by Hackney sires than any other means?—Certainly; I think the characteristic of the Hackney is action, no doubt about it.

486. Although you have no prejudice one way or the other, would the breeding of harness horses be more likely to be improved by the introduction of Hackney sires than in any other way?—I think it would be improved very much by the introduction of Hackney sires, with a judicious mixture of blood in the mares. I think the Hackney sire would improve the harness horse very much from instances I have seen myself. I have seen an instance of a hackney carman here in Dublin. I saw a mare by a Hackney sire sold by this carman at three years old for £50; it was an exceptionally fine goer, and £100 was refused at our show immediately after.

487. But you don't think it would be an equal improvement, or any improvement at all, in producing hunters?—Oh, no; I would not like to see it in the hunter at all, in any shape or form—the Hackney is a harness horse.

488. But you do think the Hackneys could be introduced in the North without any danger of the Hackney strain being spread over the country, and damaging the production of hunters?—I do; I think the hunting men know how to protect themselves.

489. You think a man could detect a strain of Hackney blood after a generation or two?—I think if he cannot detect it there is not more harm in it than cartblood in the hunter that he cannot detect at present.

490. There is no danger of the progeny throwing back?—No.

491. You think the Hackney blood would be discernible in the mare?—Yes.

492. And it would be the breeder's own fault if he could not discover it?—Yes.

The Commission adjourned.

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SECOND DAY.—WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21st, 1896.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD RATHDONNELL, LORD ASHTOWN, SIR WALTER GILBEY, SIR THOMAS G. ESMONDE, M.P., HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, MESSRS. J. L. CAREW, M.P., F. S. WRENCH, PERCY LA TOUCHE, and COL. ST. QUINTIN.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary, was in attendance.

JOSEPH R. O'REILLY, further examined.

493. The CHAIRMAN.—As a member of the Irish Harness Society, have you any more information you would like to give the Commission—as representing that society?—No, my lord, I think I gave all I had yesterday.

494. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—On the general question of horse breeding, have you any experience whether there is much breeding in Ireland, from unsound mares or stallions?—From my experience as a member of the County Dublin Horse Breeding Committee, I must say there were a great many unsound mares that came before us for nominations at the county shows; and before the registration of stallions the society found it very hard to get suitable stallions sound for the use of the country, this led to the alteration of the original scheme which was the same as that in England—subsidising stallions, giving them £200, and asking them to serve so many farmers' mares.

495. But mares?—It was found that the mares that went to those stallions were inferior, as a rule, and stallion owners were not pleased. There were several reasons for giving it up; that was one of them.

496. What system do you think the best?—I have no doubt that the best system, and the best principle, is registering sound stallions, and giving nominations to farmers to bring suitable mares to these sound stallions. A farmer's mare ought to be inspected also; soundness is just as necessary in the mare as in the sire, and I don't think there can be a better principle than to have soundness on both sides, dam and sire. The Royal Dublin Society in 1894 sanctioned a scheme requiring the stallions to be registered as perfectly sound, and the mares to be inspected at the county shows and passed sound by a veterinary surgeon.

497. Did you find that scheme popular?—It worked well in some counties, but it required time, and I do not think the society gave it sufficient time to work in the country. The registration of stallions at that time was not complete, and had not arrived at the same standard as at present; also, so many mares more or less unsound were cast when they

came before these county committees, that farmers began to hesitate. But soundness must be established by degrees, and it is my strong opinion that this principle will become the best.

498. How long is that system in operation?—First in 1892, carried on with slight alterations till 1894; in 1895 a new scheme was adopted, and 1896 was the same as 1895.

499. Mr. La Touche.—With reference to the evidence you gave yesterday I understood you to say you approved of breeding from any pure bred stallions, but you objected to any scheme of registration of half-bred stallions—what do you mean by a pure bred stallion?—By thoroughbreds I mean any stallions that are in Wetherby's Stud Book, Hackneys that are in the Hackney Stud Book, and Americans that are in the Standard Register-Trotting for American horses.

500. Why would you call a horse entered in the Hackney Stud Book a pure bred horse instead of what is usually known as a half-bred?—You can only trace them on theo ne side; in the Hackney Stud Book they are traced on both sides for many years. I believe that altogether there are twelve volumes of the Hackney Society's Register embracing, I think, the produce of 16,000 stallions and mares.

501. I take it the Hackney Stud Book was first published in 1882 or 1883; that extends over a period of thirteen years. Do you think that is long enough to constitute a pure breed?—The breed was in the country for years before; it is traced back to 1755; I believe by Hackney breeders; it was an old breed kept to itself very much in the Eastern counties of England and Yorkshire; it was kept very much to themselves in the same way that we in Ireland keep a particular breed of hunting mares.

502 I take it that you prefer a stallion from the fact of its being entered in a Stud Book in existence for thirteen years to a stallion got by a thoroughbred, out of a dam that had been crossed by a thoroughbred horse and whose dams and grand dams have for years been got by thoroughbreds?—You can trace it better with the Stud Book; you can go back on both sides for a longer period; it is easier traced. You have no Hunters Stud Book to go back to, you can only go to Weatherby's for the thoroughbreds.

503. Mr. La Touche.—Thirteen years is not a long period to constitute a pure breed?

504. Mr. Wrench.—Is it not a fact that although the Hackney Stud Book was only published in 1883 it reproduces the records kept in many families in Yorkshire and Norfolk for the last 100 years?—That is so.

505. Yesterday, I think, you said with regard to American horses that you had seen some in Belfast, and that you believed a great many American horses were imported, and that you thought they were of a worthless class?—Yes, from what I saw, but it is right to state that I only saw two ship loads.

506. Do you think that it would be prejudicial to Ireland to have these horses spread over the country?—I do, most certainly.

507. Have you at all considered, or do you suggest that there should be any way of marking these American horses?—Some do come marked; the Southern American horses are mostly branded—fortunately for this country—but some come from other ports of America without a brand. It is easy, however, to recognize them by their flat sides and lanky appearance.

508. With their tails cut off, do you think it possible to recognize them?—Well, if they were in condition it might be difficult to recognize them.

509. Do you suggest there should be a marking of foreign horses?—I certainly think it would be a great advantage.

510. I think you said you would like to see the registration of horses greatly extended?—Yes.

511. That applies to horses of all pure breeds?—Of all pure breeds.

512. Take for instance a county where the Dublin Society's scheme is not in operation, how would you ascertain what class of horses you would have registered?—I should certainly say that each county should have its own representation—the Horse-breeding Committee in that county should be the best to know the class of horses that would suit best for the county, and the sire that would best suit the mares of the county, the selection should rest very much with them.

513. Have you thought how you would form a County Horse-breeding Committee?—Breeders should be represented on the committee; that would be a matter for the counties themselves, the best system to adopt.

514. Would you leave it to the county to select the particular class of horse they required?—Yes, I would.

515. Sir Walter Gilbey.—In England all the thoroughbred horses that receive premiums are examined at the Spring Show by specially appointed veterinary surgeons. May I ask what system is pursued in Dublin?—The horses are all examined by veterinary surgeons; in 1892 they were sent down all over the country at considerable expense to examine the horses that were put on their register, and they were not put on unless passed by them as sound, and passed by the County Committees as being suitable sires to produce hunters or useful horses.

516. Do you think that a preferable system to the one in practice in England?—Yes, I think it far better.

517. Any veterinary surgeon can examine?—The Royal Dublin Society send specially in some cases, and in some cases they are satisfied with the opinion of the veterinary surgeons of the district, but in many cases they send direct, particularly in cases where there might be any suspicion.

518. You have said it was the practice in the Dublin Society to have an examination of mares. You are aware that system is not carried out in England; soundness on the sire's side we think sufficient; it has been going on for years; there is a committee appointed in the district where these stallions are, but there is no inspecting of mares; it is left to the discretion of the owners?—I don't think that is sufficient; I think soundness should be on both sides.

519. The Chairman.—You are a member of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes.

520. And on the Council?—I am on the Council, the agricultural section of the Council.

521. And you have taken a very active part in the affairs of the Society?—I have taken a great interest in all the doings of the Society.

522. When did the Society turn its attention to the question of horse breeding?—In 1887 they turned their attention to working the Government grant; they were granted £5,000 for the improvement of the stock of this country, and they devoted £3,200 to the improvement of the breed of horses for the smaller farmers in the country; the other portion went towards bull premiums.

523. And on what system did they apply this grant?—First, in 1887, on lines similar to those at present in use in England, subsidising stallions; that was changed in 1892 to registering sound stallions and issuing nominations to the value of £2 to farmers' mares, only available to horses on the Society register, and those nominations were only given to sound mares.

524. And did you find that worked well?—We found it worked extremely well; that the money went into the farmers' pocket first, and then went right to the stallion owner—first into the farmers' pocket in the shape of nominations, and then it went to the stallion owner, so that both sides were benefited, the owner of the mare and the owner of the stallion.

525. Is that system of the Society in operation throughout the whole of Ireland?—It was in operation

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throughout the whole of Ireland up to 1894, then it was altered, and I may tell you, as chairman of the County Dublin Horse Breeding Committee, that my committee unanimously reported this year asking the Royal Dublin Society to revert to the system of 1894

526. To revert to it in what way?—The system of giving nominations; the County of Dublin Committee were unanimous in expressing approval of the system of 1894, and have asked the Royal Dublin Society to revert to it.

527. What is the present system?—Of giving prizes to mares and foals in the autumn; the other system was giving nominations in the spring before the service season; the present system gives prizes to mares stinted to registered stallions, and to mares with foal at foot, and then prizes for foals got by registered stallions.

528. That is the system since 1894?—Yes.

529. And the system up to 1894 was what you have already described?—Yes.

530. And your society wish to revert to the system up to 1894?—My county committee want to revert to the 1894 system as being the best suited to our country. It is more satisfactory to stallion owners, and we think the money goes much further, and besides that more parties are benefited under it. In the present system the prize winners alone are benefited, and they are smaller as compared with the nominations. In our county we get £100, and we issued fifty nominations. Under the present system we had only thirty prizes, so that at the most not more than thirty could be benefited, and there were not that number because the foals were given prizes as well as the mares, and of the mares that got prizes their foals also got prizes, so that the number of farmers benefited was much less. I should say the proportion would be twenty to fifty.

531. Why was the old system ever altered?—I think it was because a number of mares that came up in some of the shows were considered not of the quality they ought to be, and the nominations were not all issued by the county committees. I don't think there was a general wish to alter it; it was the wish of some counties, no doubt.

532. Did any other county recently, save the county of Dublin, express any opinion as to the present system?—I can only speak for two other counties—Cork and Wexford, that I know, have expressed it, but the reports will be coming in now; we are expecting them every day.

533. And how will they be guided as to their decision?—I could not answer that question.

534. Do you think yourself that the former system was better than the present?—Most decidedly.

535. And do you think that the efforts of the Dublin Society have had any marked effect upon the improving of the breed of horses in Ireland?—I think so; from what I have seen at the last show the mares which are brought before the county committees are better, and they are sounder mares.

536. You attach great importance to the soundness of mares?—Very great importance indeed.

537. And in your opinion are the farmers inclined to sell their best mares?—If they get a good price they very often do, but there are a great many other good mares in the country.

538. Is there not a great tendency to sell the good mares and breed from inferior mares?—I do not think a farmer will sell a good mare if the produce is bringing him in a good return. I think the market very much regulates that.

539. You are very much interested in the breeding of harness horses?—I take an interest in the breeding of harness horses.

540. You have bred all classes of horses?—Yes, but I breed thoroughbreds now more than any other class.

541. As regards the profitableness of breeding harness horses in the future, has it ever occurred to you that the value of horses for all purposes may diminish, owing to the introduction of motor cars?—I do not anticipate that. I hope we will not see motor cass over here for a very long time, at any rate.

542. In breeding hunters, the produce of which might not be good enough for that purpose, would they be good enough for general utility purposes and harness horses?—Very often.

543. Would what I might call the inferior produce of Hackney stallions be of equal marketable value?—I think so for harness purposes—more so, in fact, from their action.

544. Lord ASHTOWN.—You object to half-bred sires being taken on the register of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes.

545. For what reason?—Because I think you are on unsafe ground. You may be successful, but it is risky to go outside thoroughbred registered stock—pedigree stock.

545A. Would you be averse to a register of mares being formed, so as to try and get half-bred sires with a guaranteed pedigree?—I think it would be hard to establish a register of mares. I don't know what foundations you would make. Would it be the mare that you thought would breed a hunter or had bred a hunter? Pedigree does not make a hunter or otherwise.

546. Don't you think that some sire is necessary under the scheme besides the thoroughbred?—You may for hunters; I don't think so. I do think that in many places you want a thoroughbred horse with more bone for getting hunters.

547. What would you do with the light filly?—If I found a filly would not breed a profitable animal from the thoroughbred I would get rid of her, or send her to a Hackney, and try my luck there.

548. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Do you know anything of the practice of foreign countries?—I have not visited foreign studs.

549. Do you know if there are many Irish mares bought by foreign breeders?—Yes.

550. Not so many now, I believe, as formerly?—Not so many as years ago. I could not, however, answer that question as well as others might.

551. Can you say what qualifications were necessary in mares to entitle them to premiums of the Royal Dublin Society?—They must be sound and suitable for producing hunters; all for hunters and soundness they go.

552. Lord RATHDONNELL.—With reference to your remarks about the change of system in the Royal Dublin Society, under the old system was it not a fact that owners of mares were obliged to send their mares to certain horses in the district—that they had no choice; they were obliged to send them?—Yes. The 1892 system was the registration and nomination. Previous to that the system was that of subsidising stallions—giving them £200, and obliging them to serve fifty mares, or some such qualification. In 1892 they were sent to certain set horses. They had to select their horses at the shows, only in their own district.

553. Under the present system is the choice free?—They can go to any sire in Ireland on the Register.

554. There is a remark that you made about half-bred horses I would like to ask you a question on. Suppose a half-bred horse of the stamp of the "Lawyer" or "Revenge," would you prefer to send to them or to a Hackney stallion and try your luck?—If breeding for a hunter, I would certainly send her to the "Lawyer"; if for a harness horse, I would go to the Hackney.

555. You would go to the Hackney for action even were the action of the "Lawyer" or "Revenge" good?—I would, in preference; you would be certain of it; his characteristic is action, and that he transmits it to his get, almost without exception, is my experience.

556. Mr. J. L. CAREW.—You said you were going in now for the breeding of thoroughbred stock?—Yes.

557. You have bred from Hackney sires?—I have.

558. Have you given them up?—No, but really my extent of breeding is breeding thoroughbreds for yearling sales.

559. You said in reply to Lord Ashtown that you would send the light filly to a Hackney stallion for preference?—Yes, to produce a harness horse.

560. Not a hunter?—No.

561. Colonel ST. QUINTON.—What class of harness horse would you propose to get by that cross—an agricultural or light trap horse?—You would get a light harness horse from a weedy mare crossed with the Hackney, the result would be a great deal more bone than was in the mare transmitted by the Hackney sire, you would get bone and action.

562. A useful agricultural horse or light trap horse?—It might be either, it depends on the size; if the horse be a powerful animal or of a smaller stamp.

563. Would you be able to breed what they call a light van horse?—I have seen them bred from mares that you might call a class of hunting mares; I don't say they were very light; about the same substance as would breed a hunter. I saw very fine van mares bred in that way in this country.

564. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Why do you think the light, weedy filly is more likely to breed a carriage horse than a hunter?—With the Hackney you will get bone and action which you will not with the thoroughbred with a very light filly.

565. Why should you get more bone from the Hackney than the thoroughbred if the thoroughbred had more bone?—The result is generally more bone from the Hackney than it is with the thoroughbred.

566. A particular class of thoroughbred?—Probably that would have a great deal to say to it; it is hard to get a thoroughbred with a considerable amount of bone.

566A. I have not had very much experience of looking at Hackneys, but I should not think I had ever seen a Hackney that would measure nine inches below the knee?—I think there are many of them that would.

566B. I suppose an occasional thoroughbred would too?—Certainly.

567. Is it not laid down by anatomists that the bone of a thoroughbred is of a harder and denser nature than any other?—It is of the very best, I should say.

568. Then it comes to this, that if a Hackney and thoroughbred are of equal measurement of bone, the weedy filly is just as likely to produce a bony horse by a thoroughbred as by a Hackney?—I don't go so far as that. I don't think you will get bone back so quick with a thoroughbred as with a Hackney.

569. Of course the thoroughbred with bone of this description is much more expensive and much more valuable and not within the reach of Irish farmers? Yes, that is so.

570. If such horses were put in the reach of Irish farmers the value of horses would be more increased than by bringing in a new strain?—Decidedly.

571. You would not accept the records of an Irish farmer though in his family for 100 years, as records of the breeding of half-bred mares?—I would take it *cum grano*, as the saying is.

572. You would not consider him a pure bred horse although he produced records for 100 years?—I would not.

573. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you ever met with an Irish farmer who could produce records for 100 years?—No.

574. Or 50?—No.

575. Or 20?—I suppose there are some farmers that could go back a good many years—the larger farmers.

576. Are you aware that in portions of England Hackney mares were looked upon as being so valuable that they were actually left by breeders in their wills to their sons?—I was not aware of that.

577. Is it not a matter of fact that the canon bone of a Hackney is shorter than that of a thoroughbred as a rule?—I would not go so far as that.

578. You have not studied that question?—I would not say it was.

579. With regard to the breeding of harness horses and hunters do you think the harness horse comes quicker to a saleable age than the hunter?—The Hackney comes very quick. You can put them in harness at three years old.

580. Therefore they are an early marketable horse?—Yes; you should not hunt a three-year-old, though it is done in some parts of Ireland.

581. Do you think it a great improvement that under the Scheme of 1894 the examination is not only for soundness but also for suitability?—Yes, most decidedly.

582. Before that it was only for soundness?—In 1892 they were inspected for soundness and suitability.

583. The mares?—The mares.

584. Not stallions?—The stallions put on the Register were certainly inspected but not inspected so very carefully as at present.

585. Had we any official reports as to the suitability of any stallion before he was put on the Register?—Under the 1892 scheme we sent down to inspect them.

586. It was not done as carefully then?—Not nearly, that is why I say the registration has advanced so much during the last few years that it is getting more valuable every year.

587. And the registration has been very much more perfect for the last two years?—Decidedly, very much more so.

588. Sir W. GILBEY.—You said yesterday you had experience in breeding successful Hackneys, and won prizes at the Dublin Show this year; what is your experience of breeding from hunter mares, have you used the same mare with thoroughbred stallions and Hackney stallions?—I have not put hunter mares to Hackney stallions, I have only put harness mares, nor have I seen it done round me.

589. The mares that breed these prize winners are harness mares?—Yes, my experience is limited to the county of Dublin as regards Hackneys.

590. The dams of these prize winners, were these Irish bred mares?—I could not follow their pedigree because they were bought at auctions, and really you could not trust to what you would be told; my experience of Hackneys is limited to two studs of the Hackney breed near me.

591. The CHAIRMAN.—The Hackney Stud Book is in existence for thirteen years?—Yes.

592. And it was compiled then from records in the hands of owners?—Yes, for generations.

593. You do not seem to think a Hunters Stud Book in Ireland could be compiled in the same way?—It would be too big a matter entirely. I calculate there are 102,000 brood mares in Ireland alone, and then you could not trust the pedigrees sent in.

594. You think that could be done in England but not in Ireland?—I don't know that it could be done in England either.

595. You have no knowledge yourself, personally, of the congested district where these Hackneys are?—No, only hearsay.

596. Lord RATHDONNELL.—There is one question with regard to the alteration of the Spring Shows—which I think you said you were in favour of—to the Autumn Shows, the reasons for which I believe were that those who inspected should be able to see the produce and their dams?—That was one of the reasons that was suggested as an improvement to be able to see the results, but that could be equally well achieved if funds were sufficient to continue the nomination system at Spring Shows, and in conjunction with it to give prizes to yearlings got by the registered stallions

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In that way you would see the results of the scheme, and also encourage the farmer to nurture his young horses, because success really depends to a great extent on the way the colts are fed. It would be of vast importance if farmers were trained to feed their horses the first year. If properly fed the first year there is a chance of their turning out well, if not there is no chance.

597. You said also there was rather a difficulty of tracing pedigrees in Ireland, and you were not sure it would not be difficult in England also?—Yes, but specially difficult in Ireland because horses changed hands so often; it is almost impossible, you can carry on the name of the sire but you cannot trace the dam side at all.

598. Do you see any difficulty in showing yearlings at all?—No, I don't see any difficulty in showing yearlings at the Spring Show in conjunction with a show of mares for nomination.

599. You think there could be no alteration—no change of the produce?—No, not without the knowledge of the county committees; it would be quite impossible.

600. The CHAIRMAN.—The Royal Dublin Society's scheme is not in operation in all counties?—To the best of my opinion it is in every county.

601. Mr. WRENCH.—It is in operation, but not much used in some and more in others; is not that the case?—Yes, it is better supported in some counties; it is more applied for. Some counties are stronger than others in mares. According to a return it varied in 1896 from £140 in some counties, and the county of Cork got £200.

602. Is not there constantly a surplus over from the fact of the full grants not having been made use of?—There is a slight surplus every year.

603. And it is generally expended in purchasing stallions?—Yes, which the society send to any district which they think wants a stallion; if any breeder writes to the Royal Dublin Society and asks them to send a stallion, they generally buy one and sell him to the applicant on the instalment system.

604. And that enables a man, who would not be able otherwise, to acquire a good stallion?—That is so; I think they bought ten horses on that system, to the best of my memory.

605. The CHAIRMAN.—What is that return you quoted from now?—The Society's Horse Breeding Scheme for 1896.

606. That is the latest?—Yes.

607. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—All these horses purchased by the Royal Dublin Society were thoroughbred?—Yes, without exception.

Mr. R. Hunter Pringle.

R. HUNTER PRINGLE examined.

608. The CHAIRMAN.—You are the secretary of the Irish Harness Horse Society?—I am.

609. For how long?—Since the 16th of May this year.

610. When was the society started?—All I know on that subject is derived from the information on the minutes. I know it was founded in the spring of 1895.

611. Can you give us any information as to the affairs of the society when you took office?—Yes, sir. On my accession to the secretaryship, the books of the society and the affairs generally were in arrears. I believe that this was entirely due to the fact that the secretary for the preceding year had left Ireland, and the post had been vacant or practically so. On the 16th of May no steps had been taken to collect the annual subscriptions for the year or to secure any new members.

612. How many members were there when you took office?—For 1895 there were eleven life members and forty-six annual members, total fifty-seven.

613. That was in 1895?—Yes, that represented the strength of the society at the time I became secretary.

614. You published an annual report?—We did, sir.

615. Would you put it in?—That is put in, sir. I gave Mr. Neville some twenty copies for 1895.

616. Shall you publish a report for this year?—Yes, sir.

617. When is it published?—The report for 1895 was prepared by myself, consequently it was very late in the year, it was in May, but if I am instructed by the council to do so I see no difficulty in preparing an annual report for 1896 in December.

618. Well, if your council approve of that we should like to have it?—Very well, sir; let them give me the order, and I will soon do it; I have got the whole of the financial department here before me, and I can give you any information that you would like, which would afterwards appear in the report.

619. I don't think it would be of value to us. What we want rather to know is what practical steps your society takes to further its objects in improving the breed of harness horses?—The practical steps that we have taken last year are described in the annual report so far as last year is concerned. I can tell you what has been done this year.

620. Yes, tell us?—Would you like, in the first place to know the change that has taken place in our membership?

621. Yes, I should like you to give us any information you think useful?—Contrasting 1895 and 1896, our membership has altered as follows:—Life members remain as before, eleven; the annual members have increased from forty-six in 1895 to seventy in 1896, an increase of fifty-six per cent. Our annual subscriptions for 1895 amounted to £48 6*s.*; for 1896 they amounted to £84 0*s.* 3*d.* Somebody sent me three pence by mistake, and I kept it. In that £84 there was a donation of £2 which a gentleman also sent me—I think by mistake—and I kept it. I sent him a receipt for it in the shape of a receipt for a donation, which he seemed quite pleased with. Then as to what we have done. This year we gave prizes at the Royal Dublin Society's Show in August for Class A and Class B, the same as the year before, and precisely the same amounts—£43 in all, and two silver medals, which cost £2. We gave £25 for harness horses shown in harness, over 14·2, not exceeding six years old, bred in Ireland, and exhibited by a resident in Ireland. We gave £18 to Class B for young horses suitable for harness, 14.2 and upwards, not exceeding four years old. We also, as in 1895, organised and defrayed the expense of a parade of coaches, besides presenting the driver of each coach with a team whip. The coach parade of 1896 cost our society in all £23 14*s.* 6*d.* That makes a total of £68 14*s.* 6*d.* that we gave to the Royal Dublin Society's Show. We also rendered assistance to the breeding and improvement of harness horses in Ireland by giving prizes and grants at provincial shows in the following manner and order:—To the North Eastern Agricultural Association, which held its show at Belfast, for Class 19, "For the best young horse or mare, 14.2 or over, not exceeding four years, bred in Ireland and exhibited by a resident in Ireland, to be shown in hand," we gave £10 and a silver medal. The £10 was divided into three prizes of £5, £3, and £2. To the Hollymount Society, Class 20, "For the best Hackney or harness horse bred in Ireland, gelding or mare, three years old or upwards;" we gave a cup value £5, or, if preferred, a silver medal and £5. The cup was taken. We also gave £10 towards the completion of the driving track in Hollymount show grounds.

622. Where is the Hollymount Agricultural Show ground?—In County Mayo, in Connaught. We gave to this £10, because we thought it was a good and befitting object for us to support. To the Rathdown, Rathdrum, and Shillelagh Agricultural Society, which holds its show at Bray, we gave "For the best horse, shown in hand, suitable for harness, bred in Ireland, under four years old and over 14.2 high," £5. As a matter of fact we offered £10 at that show, but I think the judges did not think the horses were up to the mark. To the County Fermanagh Agricultural Society we suggested a class for harness horses, and we gave £6 for that class. The class was —"For the best harness horse, gelding or mare, not exceeding four years old, 14.2 or over, bred in Ireland. To be shown in hand." To the Ballinasloe Agricultural Society, Class 20.—"For young horses, not exceeding four years old, with style and action suitable for harness, bred in Ireland and exhibited by a resident in Ireland, to be shown in hand," we gave a cup value £5, or if preferred a silver medal and £5. To the Clones, Co. Cavan, Agricultural Society "The Irish Harness Horse Society gave £5, to be divided between Classes B and E, as a means of encouraging the breeding of horses suitable for harness purposes." Class B was—"Driving. For the best single harness turn out. Horses not under 15 hands." Class E. "Driving. For the best single harness turn out. Ponies not exceeding 14 hands 3 inches." The summary of our expenditure in aid of harness horses and their breeding and improvement in the year 1896 shows a total expenditure of £117 4*s.* 6*d.* as against £102 12*s.* last year, an increase of £14 12*s.* 6*d.* in prize money awarded. In 1895 we gave to the Royal Dublin Society £70 14*s.* 6*d.* this year we only gave £68 14*s.* 6*d.*, or a decrease of 2·8 per cent. That happened to be because there were fewer coaches turned up. Indeed we had rather a reduction in that, because the coaches that we paid the hire upon let us down easier this year. In 1895, on the other hand, we gave to local societies £31 17*s.* 6*d.* This year we increased our assistance to local societies to £48 10*s.*, being an increase of £16 12*s.* 6*d.*, or 52·1 per cent.

623. The main difference is that you have given larger support to the local societies?—Yes, sir, we have increased our membership, we have got more money in, and we have given more money out, and we have altogether done without what we call donations. I got that accidental donation of £2, but we did not ask it, and we sought no donations to do our work this year.

624. And, I suppose, if you had a larger amount of money at your disposition you would be able to do more?—Yes, sir, we would be delighted to do so.

625. Did you consider the number of entries you obtained at the local shows satisfactory?—I issued, by the instructions of the council, letters to the secretaries of all the societies we supported, and their replies I have here. They pointed to the fact that the secretaries considered the entries fairly satisfactory. We think—I am speaking on behalf of the council—that they might be greatly improved both in quality and number. In Belfast we had a good show in quality, and fifteen entries, being two more than for Class B at Ballsbridge. In Enniskillen we had 15, Ballinasloe 6, Hollymount 13, Clones 17 in all classes —10 and 7. At Bray I never could exactly tell the number of entries; there seemed to be some confusion on the part of the stewards, and the horses did not turn up at the time they should have.

626. Then in your opinion, and in the opinion of your society, the entries are not quite satisfactory either in point of numbers or in point of quality?—I hardly would like to express an opinion on behalf of the society. I am not sure that the question was ever raised in council, but I certainly, if I dare speak as secretary, think there is certainly room for considerable improvement, both in numbers and quality.

627. I think you said you got answers from the secretaries of the local shows?—Yes, sir.

628. Perhaps you would let me look at one and see if they would be useful to us. Do they speak of the quality as well as of the quantity?—I issued a circular with three questions.

628A. Just read one?—This is from the Secretary, Mr. R. J. Gill, of the Ballinasloe Agricultural Society. The questions were:—"1. State the number of exhibits for the class or classes for which the Society last year awarded a cup or prize?—Answer, 18." This refers to 1895. "2. Were the exhibits, generally speaking, of a good quality, or did you, on the contrary, observe a marked need for improvement. If so, kindly state in what direction?—Answer. Of fair quality considering the district and the novelty of the class. A marked need for improvement is very necessary. Horses should be more of a harness class, and quality and knee-action should be attended to 3. Are you of opinion that the exhibition of harness horses is deserving of support, and with a view to popularising and improving the breeding of animals of this description, are you prepared to recommend continued action on the part of this Society on lines similar to those hitherto pursued?—Answer. Yes; and no doubt difficulties will to a great extent disappear when breeders find harness horses are classed in shows, and a distinct market thus afforded. Hitherto in Ireland the only horse relegated to harness was a horse unfit for a hunter by underbreeding or otherwise."

629. And the other letters are more or less similar to that?—Yes sir; I think so. I think there is one of them hardly deals with the point, but it happens to be in my list, and I will put it in with the others.

630. These are all for 1895?—All for 1895.

631. Have you sent out similar questions this year?—No, sir; I was not instructed to do so. The time is hardly come, but I shall certainly do so soon.

632. At present you cannot be in a position to say whether the quality is improved or not?—I will answer that question, sir, to the best of my ability.

633. On what grounds can you answer it, if you have not the replies?—I attended some of these shows, and spoke to a good many men myself, and I have had various letters, not in answer to any formal circular. Although one sees at every show some animals of merit as harness horses, there is, in the opinion of those qualified to express one, great room for improvement, especially in the matter of action. At Clones there was not one single beast with first class action. Only two out of seventeen had any pretension to action. At Hollymount only the prize winners were worth looking at as movers in harness: outside these it appeared to me to be a very poor class. What struck me most was that the good movers invariably belonged to gentlemen of means—large farmers or proprietors, whereas the exhibits of the farming classes were shuffling slovens and only half broken so far as mouthing goes. I lived in the Hollymount district for eleven years—from 1873 to 1884—and consequently I do know something about that district. Contrasting this year with the period 1873 to 1884, I should say the harness horses in Hollymount district had distinctly deteriorated. This may, however, be due to the fact that formerly every country-house was occupied, and there were plenty of good turn outs. So far as the farmers are concerned, I believe the type of harness horse is worse than it was.

634. You mean there is more demand?—I think the best youngsters are sold, and the rubbish kept to a greater extent than was the case before agriculture became a bad business. I think that is one of the causes that is operating.

635. Is that all you wish to say on that point?—Yes, sir; that is all I have on that point.

636. What part of the country does your society principally confine its operations to?—All over Ireland.

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637. Do you consider any particular parts of Ireland more naturally adapted to breeding this class of horses than others?—I am not too sure that it is a case of adaptation. I think it is more taste. Certainly in the North of Ireland they are far more disposed towards harness horse-breeding than in Leinster.

637A. They breed fewer hunters and more harness horses in the North, and more hunters and fewer harness horses in the South?—Yes; I should think so. I can tell you. I have got some statistics on that subject which may be of some use. I undertook in response to Mr. Neville to do anything I could in the way of statistics, and I have tried to do so. I can give you for every county in Ireland the percentages of the various purposes for which horses are kept.

638. What do you take these statistics from?—They are all taken from the agricultural returns for Ireland, and I have placed the different classes in different columns, and calculated the whole of the percentages myself.

939. Perhaps you would give us the percentages—the results?—I will, sir. The returns refer to 1895. I am putting out of account anything under two-year-olds, because I think the percentages that apply to two-year-olds and upwards would apply to the others so far as the purposes for which they were bred, kept, or used. In Ulster 88 per cent. of the two-year-olds and upwards are bred, kept, or used for agricultural purposes; 8·8 per cent. are bred, kept, or used for purposes of traffic and manufacture, and 3·2 per cent. for purposes of amusement and recreation. I calculate that there is one brood mare to every 144 acres in Ulster. I arrive at that conclusion in this way. I take the number of horses under one year, and I take the basis which I believe was laid down by the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding in England that 40 per cent. of mares as barren would be a fair allowance; and there is no difficulty whatsoever in taking that, and working upon that and finding the number of brood mares.

640. On that supposition?—Yes, on that supposition.

641. Do you divide the provinces into counties?—I have it all in counties here, sir.

642. Can you give us the same percentages and statistics for counties?—Yes, I can, sir.

643. I think that will be advisable?—I have got every county by itself, and every single column has got a space for each county.

644. Can you give us the counties of Ulster?—I will put in this document if you like. I only finished it last night, and I have not got it properly headed, but I have no doubt your lordship will allow me to add that.

645. We will go on with the provinces?—Yes, sir; and if at any time you should wish I will be only too delighted to give you a county. In Leinster 74 per cent. of two year olds and upwards are kept, used, or bred for agricultural purposes; 14 per cent. for traffic and manufactures; and 10·7 per cent. for amusement and recreation. In Munster 85·5 per cent. are for agricultural purposes; 7·7 for traffic and manufacture; and 6·6 for amusement and recreation. In Connaught 89 per cent. are kept for agricultural purposes; 5·4 for traffic and manufacture; and 5·5 per cent. for amusement and recreation. I do not absolutely carry out the decimal figures in all cases, but I think you will find that I account for 99 per cent. and over of all the horses, two year olds and upwards, and if you ask me to do so I can very easily account for the 100 per cent. It is just simply carrying out the figures a little further.

646. I suppose those used for traffic would be heavy draught horses?—I think it means van horses, dray horses, lorry horses, bakers, butchers, cart horses—in fact traffic and manufacture. If you would like the figures for Ireland as a whole I have them. The total number of horses, two years old and upwards, in Ireland is 464,606. The percentage engaged in agricultural purposes is 83·6, in traffic and manufacture 9·8, and in amusement and recreation 6·57. Total 99·97. I have submitted these figures because I think they will give you an indication of the different interests in Ireland, and your lordship will take note of the fact that the agricultural interest appears to be of overwhelming importance.

647. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Can you define what amusement and recreation means?—I cannot tell you what amusement means; it is a very wide term.

648. The CHAIRMAN.—Are many horses sold out of the country under two years old?—I am afraid we are very far behind the world in these statistics. I have got the Board of Agriculture Returns for 1895, and I have looked through them, and I am not very sure that they specify two years old. They don't. They specify stallions, mares, geldings, and the average importation to Great Baitain. That is all I can tell you—the importation to Great Britain from Ireland. The average for 1893, 1894, and 1895 was 32,679.

649. Of all kinds?—Mares and geldings, that is excluding stallions.

650. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—What does "export" mean?—Export from Ireland, import to England, these are English agricultural statistics.

651. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you give us the number of horses in each province?—I can. I can give you the number of horses under one year, one year and under two, and two years old and upwards. I can also give you the total number of horses in each province.

652. Give us the numbers for each province of two years old and upwards?—Ulster 161,559; Leinster 140,608; Munster 112,615, and Connaught 49,824 Total 464,606.

653. Can you give us also the total number of horses in Ireland of all ages by provinces?—Yes, I can. Ulster 193,661; Leinster 207,751; Munster 161,104; and Connaught 76,933. Total 639,449.

654. There are no statistics, you say, to show the export of horses over two years old?—There may be, but I am not aware of them. I really have not asked Dr. Grimshaw myself, I had not got time.

655. You will be able to put in statistics the same as these for the counties?—Yes; I have got everything before me here.

656. We will not trouble you to read it. Have you any other statistical information?—I made out this: I think it may be of some use to you. It is more or less an adaptation of the figures on that sheet. I made out this as indicating the different tendencies in each province, breeding or buying. I have found that in Ulster breeders sell largely under one year old. Taking the figures in that table as fair averages, one year with another, the horses under one year old in Ulster exceed those over one and under two years old by 6,086 or 37 per cent. That is to say those under one exceed those over one and under two by 37 per cent. Ulster, therefore, I take it, breeds and rears largely for sale at an early age. There are 193,661 horses of all ages in Ulster, of which 27,631 are calculated as being brood mares—that is, one in every seven horses in Ulster is a brood mare.

657. You don't mean kept exclusively for breeding?—Well, of course, it is more or less a manipulation of figures. I calculated the number of brood mares as well as possible without any absolute information, and then I divide the number of horses of all ages by the number of brood mares, which gave one in seven. In Leinster the foals bred in the province are evidently not sufficient for the requirements of the horse keepers of Leinster. The home supply therefore is supplemented from other districts. The number of those over one and under two years old exceed those under one by 11·125 or just exactly 48 per cent. Leinster, consequently, has not such strong claims as Ulster to be considered a purely breeding and rearing province. She has to find 11,125 yearlings outside her own boundaries. There are in

Leinster 207,751 horses of all ages, of which 38,327 are believed to be brood mares—that is one to five. In Munster the horses over one and under two exceed those under one by 6,091, or 28 per cent. Munster, accordingly, is unable to supply her own wants in the one year old and under two years old department, but ranks higher than Leinster, though not so high as Ulster as a purely breeding and rearing province. In Munster there are 161,104 horses of all ages, of which 28,338, or almost one in six, are computed to be brood mares. In Connaught the horses between one and two years exceed those under one by 805, or 6 per cent. Connaught may therefore be treated as self-supporting, or at any rate, selling only to a small extent under one year old. Of the 76,933 horses of all ages in Connaught, 21,919, or one in three, are brood mares. This is doubtless due to the smallness of the holdings, and to the fact that most of the small farmers keep a working mare from which they breed.

658. Your general deduction from that would be that, taking them as separate entities, Connaught is about self-supporting; Leinster and Munster obliged to import, and that Ulster supplies them?—That is exactly my summary. But it is right to say that I believe these figures are correct: they are all checked, but in making a summary there is a surplus of 11,935 animals, the origin of which is utterly unexplained by statistics—that is 13 per cent.

659. But of course the relative amount of exportation from the different provinces would upset all those conclusions?—Of course it would naturally: that is what comes in, but I have not got it at my disposal.

660. Perhaps you don't think it can be done?—I would not like to go so far as that; I know it does not appear on the agricultural returns.

661. Those are very interesting statistics. Have you got any further statistical matters?—I think I am exhausted.

662. Can you give us any figures as to the annual production?—Of course I have the figures of the year-olds—the numbers of year-olds in each county—and I should think that would form some reliable basis of arriving at the annual production.

663. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you got that in the provinces?—Yes; and counties.

664. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you give us under the year old?—Yes. That is all in the agricultural statistics. In 1895 the horses under one year old in Ulster were 22,094; in Leinster, 22,999; in Munster, 21,204; and in Connaught, 13,152.

665. Then the yearly productions in Ulster and Leinster appear to be very much the same?—They are practically the same, but then the extraordinary thing is———

666. The total amount in Ulster is much larger than in Leinster?—It is, sir.

667. Mr. CAREW.—Of all ages?—Ulster is larger than Leinster in two-year-olds, but not in all ages.

668. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—According to your statistics Leinster would do the biggest trade in horses?—Leinster buys.

669. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you give any explanation; because it seems on the face of it curious that the production appears to be very much the same in Ulster and in Leinster, and the number of the two year-olds in Ulster is larger, while the total amount of Leinster is larger than that of Ulster?—I can offer an explanation. Although they are breeders in Ulster to as large an extent as they are in Leinster, still they sell at an early age there, and Leinster buys. I should say Leinster was more of a horsey country for one-year-olds.

670. Mr. CAREW.—You say in Ulster 161,000 are two-year-olds and over?—161,559.

671. And of all ages 193,000?—That is right.

672. That would give 32,000 under two years old?—Yes, and the other figures seem to come to 38,000.

673. Your contention is that Ulster is the great breeding province?—Yes, and that they sell early there.

674. I want to point out this—that of two year olds and over in Ulster there are 161,559, and of all ages 193,661. If you deduct the two year olds from all ages you get 32,000 under two year olds in Ulster. Now, in Leinster you get 140,000 of two year olds and over, and 207,000 of all ages, which would give to Leinster 67,000 of under two year olds?—Yes.

675. Does not that seem to contradict your statement that Ulster would be the breeding province?—I think not, sir. It simply implies that Ulster men sell as yearlings, and that Leinster men buy.

676. You have no experience?—No; I am simply taking the figures as they are before me.

677. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say the Ulster men sell more yearlings into Leinster than Leinster into Ulster?—Yes; certainly.

678. The CHAIRMAN.—Can you attend another day?—I will be only too glad, because I only took up this matter last night, and I just checked the figures, and totted them up.

679. Mr. CAREW.—My experience is that Ulster buys from Leinster, brings them out, and breaks them in? (*Witness.*)—Under what age?

680. Under two years old, and then your figures would be right, I think?—Ulster sells over 6,000 as yearlings, and Leinster buys from somewhere or other.

681. I think your figures clearly show that Leinster is the great breeding province, and that Ulster is not.

682. The CHAIRMAN.—In the meantime if you could get us any information about the exports?—I daresay I can.

683. Did you hear the evidence of Mr. O'Reilly?—I heard part of it, sir.

684. Generally, do you agree with what he said, or do you wish to make any remark about it?—I did not agree with what he said about the preponderance of the hunter interest over the harness interest.

685. I think Mr. O'Reilly spoke about the objects of his society being to improve the harness horse without interfering in any way with the production of hunters?—We are all at one there. I don't think there is any difference of opinion amongst the members of the Harness Horse Society about that. We do not wish in the slightest way to interfere with the breeding of hunters—far from it. But I do not think Mr. O'Reilly was quite right in the statement he made that the hunting interest for exportation simply predominated to an extremely large degree over the harness. I believe there are far more horses exported for harness purposes than there are for hunting purposes.

686. From what parts?—From Ireland as a whole. I cannot say I am very sure upon the point, because we have no absolute statistics to guide us. I don't think that there is such an enormous number of Irish hunters in England as what is made out. There are a very considerable number, but I do not think it is so enormous as people try to make out. I know the South of Scotland very well: it is my native county, and I am quite sure—taking the Duke of Buccleugh's and the Jed forest hunts—I am quite sure that there are not ten in every hundred that are Irish-bred hunters.

687. You think the proportion of horses exported for harness horses is much larger than is generally supposed?—I am sure of it, and I am sure that there is a far greater demand for them.

688. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You would hardly take the South of Scotland as a criterion?—No, sir; but it is better to talk of a district you really know about.

689. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I would like to ask Mr. Pringle if he has ever had much experience in the breeding of horses?—I did breed horses and kept horses to a considerable extent: they were chiefly agricultural horses. I did keep hunting horses, but I do not offer evidence as an expert on the

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subject at all: on the contrary, I have never pushed myself forward as an authority on horses.

690. I take it then that you don't wish to put forward any recommendation to improve the breed of horses?—No, sir; I am here as a secretary.

691. Mr. CAREW.—Mr. O'Reilly did say that the breeding of hunters was by far the most important part of the horse breeding industry?—He did.

692. You don't think so?—I think that in order to answer that question one must take into consideration the fact that Ireland is a country of many and various interests. I believe it is an uncontradictable fact that among the upper ten, the upper crust, the hunting industry is undoubtedly the predominant one and the best paying one, but I seriously question any assertion that would make out that among the small farmers under fifty acres the hunting interest almost existed at all.

693. But don't you think it is in the interest of the small farmers to breed hunters—a serviceable horse to do his farming work in the beginning?—I think it is in the interests of the 85 per cent. who follow agriculture to breed horses best suitable for agricultural pursuits.

694. Can you not combine the two in the earlier stages?—It must be a proper combination, and I am not at all prepared to say in my opinion that the thoroughbred blood is suitable for agricultural purposes.

695. But has not that combination done very well up to the present?—I don't think it has done well at all. The country is crammed full of weeds.

696. What do you think would improve it?—I am not going to make recommendations, sir.

697. The CHAIRMAN.—If you have got any private opinions on the matter we shall be very pleased to hear them. Speak as yourself and not as the secretary?—I came as a secretary. If you want to see me again on the subject I will be delighted to try and come in another capacity.

698. Mr. Carew.—You say as your opinion that Irish horses are not so much used in the United Kingdom?—In my opinion. I know they are traded upon; it is a great recommendation to a hunter to say it is Irish-bred. I know that there are many horses pawned off as Irish that never crossed the Cheviots—that never crossed from here.

699. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say you don't think the hunter interest is at all a predominant one amongst the farmers holding 50 acres and under?—That is my opinion.

700. Because when you allude to farmers holding 50 acres and under you allude to those farmers who breed horses. Of course the question Mr. Carew put to you dealt with the farmer's interest in horse-breeding who pursued it?—Yes; I know very well that farmers under 50 acres are very large breeders. I could tell you the number in every county.

701. You say the agricultural horse interest in Ireland represents something like 83 per cent.?—I said the agricultural pursuit interest.

702. I think the statistics you gave us as regards horses showed that something like 83 per cent. of all horses in Ireland was used for agriculture?—Yes, agricultural pursuits.

703. But many of the farmers holding fifty acres or under who are horse breeders cannot breed for agricultural purposes on their own farms at any rate—they breed for sale?—I should say they breed for both.

704. But a farmer with, we will say, fifty acres, would not require more than two horses?—No, he would not.

705. If one of them happened to be a brood mare, in six years he might have naturally six horses?—Yes.

706. Consequently he must breed for sale?—Yes, for work and sale. The ultimate end of the animal is sale doubtless.

707. Then it is the interest of the farmer to breed the more valuable horse?—Yes, it is the interest of all farmers to breed a valuable horse.

708. Not essentially that he should not breed an agricultural horse, but a horse that will make most money in the market?—Yes, certainly so; of course it is.

709. Col. ST. QUINTON.—I want to know does Mr. Pringle draw any distinction between the agricultural horse and the harness horse?—Taking these statistics it is very difficult to exactly tell where the harness horse comes in in these statistics. I take it that traffic and manufacture and a portion of amusement and recreation might safely be put down to harness horses.

710. You would not call an ordinary light harness horse an agricultural horse?—I believe, as a matter of fact, these returns do include as horses for agricultural purposes a very large number of these light horses that you are referring to, if they are used for agricultural purposes, and they are throughout the country. You will see things of ponies going in ploughs. I believe that constitutes in the eyes of the collectors of these figures agricultural purposes. I am quite sure it does, because in the districts that I know best the animals which are used for agricultural labour are not agricultural horses in the English or Scotch meaning of the term at all. It is just the purpose that they are put to.

711. But it seems to me that you only classify two classes of horses, and there are so many very different classes of horses, and you lay great stress on the hunter breed. If you were to call it the riding horse—because the export of Ireland in riding horses is very large indeed, exclusive of the hunting horses?—Yes, I quite agree with you, sir, and I am much obliged to you for the idea. I think a great many of those horses which are sold through country fairs could not be called hunters. They are a sort of indefinite animal, they are ridden, driven, and worked on the land.

712. Different governments—the government of our own country, and the government of various countries—take annually a very large number of riding horses which are not hunters, which are not grown up to the hunter standard, but which are very useful as riding horses; therefore it is a riding horse and not a hunting horse to which the term should be applied?—Quite right, I know you are an infinitely higher authority than I am on the subject.

713. We only want to arrive at a fair conclusion to the country. You want the agricultural horse and the riding horse as well as the light trap horse and the hunting horse?—Yes, the number of horses given as under agricultural pursuits include a very large number of horses which although used for agricultural purposes to a small extent are, to look at them, more riding horses and perhaps driving horses; but the fact of their being used for agricultural purposes brings them under that heading.

714. Mr. WRENCH.—You differ from Mr. O'Reilly very widely as to your figures about hunters as compared with other horses?—Well, sir, the figures I have submitted are not my own figures but the statistics.

715. You don't think that by any chance the Registrar-General could have included fox-hunting as an agricultural pursuit?—It would require a considerable strain of imagination to do that.

716. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Have you any figures of the export of horses?—I have the figures of import to Great Britain.

717. Importation to England—export to Ireland? Yes, I have both.

718. I wanted to know the last of the returns of the exportation of horses to England?—The return is that of the Board of Agriculture in London, and therefore the horses are imports in this return.

719. The CHAIRMAN.—Imports from Ireland?—Yes.

720. Mr. La Touche.—They are classified?—Only as mares and geldings and stallions. They go back to the year 1875. I have got the last, and the average of the last three years.

721. The Chairman.—We will take them both.

Witness.—Do you want me to include stallions, or just mares and geldings?

722. Everything.

Witness.—188 stallions were imported into Great Britain from Ireland last year; of mares, 15,370 were imported; and of geldings, 19,002; making a total of mares and geldings of 34,372, or a total of stallions, mares, and geldings of 34,560.

723. Mr. Wrench.—Apparently that would not include any horses that were taken to other countries from Ireland?—No, sir; there are no particulars in the agricultural statistics of Ireland, neither are there in the agricultural returns from Great Britain, on the export of horses from Ireland to foreign countries, so far as I can see.

724. Sir Walter Gilbey.—In many of these depots where Irish horses are sold, as there are no figures to guide one, what was your experience of the class of horse that was sold? Take York, London, the eastern counties; they are a mixed class for busses, hunters, &c.?—Yes, they are just that sort of indefinite and very-difficult-to-be-described animal which we have throughout very large portions of Ireland. They will do for a variety of purposes. If they happen to be big enough I suppose they may go to trams or busses. I should say that a very great many of them find their way to hansoms and cabs. The ordinary animal that I have seen in the fair in the west of Ireland, and the ordinary animal—putting aside high-class hunters—that I have seen sold as Irish horses in England—it is very difficult to define what they are. They are suitable for various purposes.

After the adjournment,

Major C. W. Studdert examined.

725. Chairman.—Major Studdert, I understand you are a resident in County Clare?—I am, my lord.

726. What part of the county?—Within six miles of Ennis, a place called Cragmoher, near Corofin.

727. You are a breeder of horses yourself?—I am.

728. What class of horses?—I am now breeding thoroughbreds. I bred a great many half-bred hunters.

729. You have acted as judge, I think, at a number of shows in the country as well as in England?—I have.

730. I take it that you have had a considerable experience in breeding horses yourself, and a large experience of horses generally?—Yes, I have over forty years' experience.

731. You have also attended markets and fairs in this country?—Yes, I have, my lord, all those years.

732. And in Great Britain?—I have, yes; in Great Britain, some; not, of course, as many as in this country. But I have attended fairs and markets on the other side.

733. Taking the larger area first, the whole country of Ireland, from your experience, have you formed any opinion as to what class of horses it is most profitable to breed?—I have.

734. What do you think?—Hunters and high class harness horses.

735. What do you mean by high-class harness horses?—A lot of horses are bred in my own county and the next county to me that Wimbush buys. He pays from £70 to £120 apiece for three-year old colts. He buys them as harness horses, and a great many of them would make very perfect looking hunters, too.

736. The same class of horse, in fact, as the hunter?—Very much.

737. How would they be bred?—I think, without exception, by thoroughbred horses.

738. Out of what class of mares?—Well, out of rather well-bred mares—some of them small mares, some of them weedy mares. In some parts of my own county, the land is very good, and they produce very good sized horses by thoroughbred sires, some of them by what we would call old Irish mares.

739. We have heard that expression used several times, and I daresay it is thoroughly understood by most members of the Commission. Personally, I should be glad if you could give me some explanation of what is meant by an old Irish mare?—My idea of what I would call an old Irish mare is a long, low mare, about 15·2, with good neck, head, and shoulders. She might have some hair on her legs, too. She is a mare that can go eight Irish miles twice a day for what we call a creel of turf and come back and be none the worse of it. She trots with the empty creel five or six miles an hour, and brings back the full creel, and that does not do her any harm. That goes on for months.

740. How are they produced?—They are produced from old Irish blood, with some crosses of thoroughbred blood. They have a tight, nice head on them, nearly all of them.

741. Have they Hackney, or Cleveland, or any such blood in them?—I don't think they would do thirty-two miles a day if they had Cleveland or any other or Hackney blood either in them, from my own experience.

743. Have you any experience of Cleveland or Hackney horses?—Yes, I have experience. I have ridden and driven Hackneys in England.

744. You never bred from them?—No. I rode and drove in Suffolk both Yorkshire and Norfolk Hackneys.

745. In your opinion what would be the effect of the introduction of Hackney or Cleveland blood in producing the class you describe—high class harness horses and hunters?—I have no hesitation in saying that in my opinion it would be ruinous to that class of horse, and a great means of ruining the Irish farmer.

746. It would deteriorate the produce?—I am sure it would, and I am sure it would bring us on the same level as the English farmer, and any man of practical experience I think will say that you can go to England and buy ten four year olds as good looking as ten Irish four year olds, and if I was to bring them home and be dishonourable enough to give them fictitious pedigrees I could get from 40 to 50 per cent. more for them here as Irish horses than I could buy them for on the other side. If you bring the same class of blood into Ireland that those horses are bred from in England I think the Englishman is not fool enough to come over and give us 40 or 50 per cent. more for our horses than he is willing to give the English farmer for theirs.

747. Then you would consider that the 40 or 50 per cent. superiority that they represent consist in superiority in the breeding?—I do, my lord.

748. And consists in the use of thoroughbred sires?—Thoroughbred sires beyond any other sires to get harness horses or hunters to pay. I have ridden Irish hunters and English hunters a great deal, and I think it is almost impossible to form an opinion of their relative merits if you don't ride them.

749. Is any part of county Clare under the Congested Districts Board?—I think not. It is under the Royal Dublin Society rules.

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750. Then you think if Hackney blood was largely introduced into this country it would have a prejudicial effect upon the buyers?—I am sure it would.

751. We have had the opinion stated in evidence that the Hackney strain would be so easily detectable that there would be no danger of its having any effect upon the breed of hunters produced in this country unless the owners of mares chose to make use of it—what do you think about that?—I don't think that. A man who has been brought up to horses and is a good judge would perhaps be able to detect the nasty big necks and straight shoulders and knee action, without any shoulder action, but the vast majority of those who buy horses are not what I call judges of horses, and I don't see how they could detect it.

752. What I want to ascertain is whether in your opinion, assuming that in certain districts the introduction of Hackney blood might be useful in those districts, there would be any probability that that blood would spread throughout the country generally, and act prejudicially in other districts more suitable for the breeding of hunters?—I think it quite possible and quite probable that it would spread.

753. And that it could not be detected by the average farmer?—No, certainly not.

754. Are many remounts of the Government bought in your part of the country?—The English Government?

755. Yes?—Our own Government buy on the average I think about 60 or 70 horses a year from the farmers about.

756. And are they bought by other countries?—Yes, vast numbers for the Dutch, Italians, French, and Danes.

757. How are they bought?—They are bought by dealers, Messrs. Widger and Mr. Meleady. The Widgers are the largest buyers, but there are others buying too.

758. What class of horses are they?—They are nice well bred class of horses, particularly those that are bought for foreigners. They are usually three year olds. There are some beautiful ones. Some beautiful colts and fillies go away with them.

759. Would you consider that the introduction of Hackney blood, for instance, would have a prejudicial effect upon those horses also?—Certainly. I think it would have a wonderful effect upon the foreign buyers. I have spoken to several of them and they told me so.

760. Have you any idea what objection they would have to the Hackney strain?—They all look upon them as what you would call a barn door breed. A sort of animal that you can drive him in one day what would take him three to get back. I mean they have no staying powers. They are all very well for show purposes, driving up and down, or for driving up and down a street, but I think any man of experience must come to the conclusion that they are a very useless animal.

761. What class of mares have you in county Clare?—We have a nice class of well bred mares. They have marvellously improved since the Royal Dublin Society started. As Mr. O'Reilly explained to you, though we had a fewer number of mares at the show this year, they were an uncommon lot of nice mares.

762. Do you think the Royal Dublin Society has had a good effect?—I think it had a very good effect, but I agree with Mr. O'Reilly in thinking, however, that the previous system had a better effect than the present system. I think if it was worked perhaps on a little different lines it would have a very marked effect on the class of horses Ireland would produce in a very few years.

763. Have you formed any opinion as to the relative value commercially of the breeding of hunters or harness horses—the export value I mean?—Well, in my own county I think they are about equal. In my own county, with very few exceptions, the high price horses are three year olds. I think they are about equally bought—other high class harness horses and other high class hunters. The harness horses go for quite as much money as the colts bought for hunters.

764. What kind of stallions are there in your county?—All those horses I tell you of were got by thoroughbred stallions.

765. What thoroughbred stallions are there in the county?—I know a good many of them. I could run over a good many of them.

766. Are they well adapted to the class of mares you have in the country?—Well, I don't think they are, my lord. I think there ought to be a few more good horses there.

767. What is the matter with them?—I think a good many of them too weedy, too leggy, and they are not thick enough. I think the horse we would want in my country is a thick short-legged horse, with good knees and hocks. I think that is more important than perhaps size, even in producing good sized horses.

768. By thoroughbred horses?—I mean thoroughbred horses.

769. What kind are the fees there?—Well, from £2 to £4. £4 is the highest. That horse covers sixty mares.

770. Do you think the price has very much effect upon the farmer in determining the stallion to which he sends his mare?—Yes. There can be no question about that. If the farmer could get a thoroughbred horse for the same price as any other class, I should think I am quite safe in saying that over 95 per cent. would go to the thoroughbred horse.

771. Have you any half-bred stallions in the country?—Yes. I think I am underestimating when I say 95 per cent. of the farmers would go to the thoroughbred. It is the money that prevents them sending to the thoroughbred.

772. They would like a good horse, but they cannot afford to pay for him?—Yes; they like a thoroughbred horse.

773. It would not pay a man as a commercial business to have a good thoroughbred horse?—That is just it, and that is the reason the first system of the Royal Dublin Society was the better one. I think the first system, with a little modification, is what the country would require.

774. What age are they sold at—three year old?—Yes, and lots of yearlings and two year olds are sold too. Nearly all buy three year olds. The farmers that are comfortable, the large farmers of over fifty acres, generally keep their horses if they are promising until they are three year olds. Of course they sometimes sell them as two year olds and yearlings.

775. How do they treat their young stock—do they treat them well?—They do not feed them as well as they ought. I am always preaching to them, and I am getting them into it a bit, and they are feeding them better the first year now. You cannot get a poor farmer to feed his horse as he ought. If they would only feed them well the first year they could stand a great deal of roughing. Some of the land is very good, and some of the horses grow well, though not put into a house in winter. Some may get a bit of hay. That is all they get.

776. Are they housed in winter?—They are not housed at all. It is a mild country.

777. Do you think the farmers generally appreciate the necessity of breeding from their best mares?—I do, my lord. But it is really very seldom a good mare is kept unless she meets with an accident. Nearly all the good mares are sold for hunters, or if they have plenty of size they are sometimes bought to make hunters of them, or go as remounts to other countries. Some lovely mares go away foreign. Consequently I think if young mares could be encouraged it would have a wonderful effect. I have been always saying that.

778. How would you propose to do that?—My idea would be to have a show every year for mares, to give

no prizes for aged mares but to subsidize their fees to a stallion. But I would give a prize to three year old mares and four year old mares, or good two year old mares stinted to registered horses. I think that would have a wonderful effect. But there is one thing that strikes me—perhaps I am wrong—that the farmer requires education as to the horse he puts his mare to. Not only that, but suppose you subsidize a lot of mares and there are half a dozen registered stallions in the county, one man may be very much more popular than the others, and as long as his horse is open the farmers will send him the mares though that horse might not be suited to these particular mares, and I think if there were two people who really knew their business that went around, and I don't think it would cost much, and see these stallions in the county, because it is nonsense to speak as I heard somebody do of the farmers being able to send their mares to other horses, they won't send them out of the county, but if there were two men who knew their business to see the stallions and see the mares, and to say that that mare should be subsidized but she must go to such a stallion and another mare to go to another stallion that in their judgment suited the mares I think that would have a marvellous effect.

779. The farmer's choice is largely determined by the popularity of the owner?—Yes, a good deal. But if they only get a subsidy for a particular horse they will go to that particular horse.

780. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Are there in your district a large number of stallions of all kinds?—Well, there are, sir, in the county.

781. In the district?—In Ireland we take the county as a district.

782. I don't ask the precise number—but are there a great many weedy, inferior stallions in your country?—Yes, I should think they are in the majority—the weedy, inferior ones.

783. The average value I suppose is very small indeed?—Yes, very small. Some are not fit to serve at all I should say.

784. Do you advocate the use of half-bred stallions—when I say half-bred I mean stallions with a good number of crosses of the thoroughbred in them, only not purely thoroughbred?—I know what you mean. Well, I think they might be serviceable if you could draw the line. There is where the great difficulty comes in. Of course I heard stallions mentioned here to-day as half-bred, but any one of those stallions I heard mentioned is just as likely to produce a Liverpool winner as if it had a clear pedigree. I think "Lawyer" was one. The dam was bred with a stain and he lost his pedigree. Then there is "May Boy" whose produce ran second the other day for the Cesarewitch. He is not a thoroughbred, but he is only technically out of the Stud Book.

785. With good guarantees should you object to stallions with H.B. to their names?—If you had a proper Board—we will say a small Board, because I have not much faith in very large Boards—if you had a small Board that regularly went into that and knew what they were going into, I would not have an objection.

786. And would you prefer a horse bred in that way to any other breed?—Certainly, except the thoroughbred. Of course I would prefer them to any of these nondescript breeds you were talking of.

787. I think you said in your evidence that about forty per cent. more was likely to be given for an Irish horse than for an English horse of the same quality and appearance?—Appearance, certainly.

788. And do you make that assertion on the ground of the present prestige which the blood that has been hitherto used in Ireland has given to the Irish horse?—I do, sir. I go further. I know it to be a fact that I can buy a horse fifty per cent. cheaper in England than I can buy that same horse in Ireland—I mean a horse of the same conformation and same action.

789. It is the prestige of blood and stamina that gives the Irish horse the extra value?—Yes. Englishmen know well that they carry them better than the same looking horse, an English bred horse.

790. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say you have bred hunters?—Yes.

791. I suppose you always took for granted that the thoroughbred sire was the best for hunters?—Always.

792. You always had a suitable horse?—Yes.

793. Don't you think there are a great many mares not suitable for breeding hunters?—Certainly.

794. What would you suggest the farmer should do with those?—I should suggest that if he was well enough off cutting their throats. Still you can't get over the fact that some of these valueless weedy looking mares do breed extraordinary fine looking horses.

795. Have not soil and climate a good deal to do with it?—Yes, and chance. No man can tell the mare that is going to produce you a good animal. The doctrine of chance comes in there. Some of the mares that produced even valuable race horses were not good-looking mares. Still you must go on the system of giving a good-looking mare to the horse as more likely to produce good offspring than a bad-looking mare.

796. Especially if the land suits and the climate?—Yes, the land has a great deal to do with it.

797. Don't you think the difference between the English and the Irish horse comes in the bringing up. The Englishman puts his horse in the winter in the strawyard. We run our horses all the winter. We have a milder climate and a more natural bringing up?—I think that has a great deal to do with it. Still I think all strength in the English hunter comes from the cart blood, and though they might have freedom of action I never met one of them that tired with me that came again that day, and when they fall with you they are not at all quick to get up again.

798. Allowing that the Englishman does use cart blood, is he not obliged to use cart blood in order to get that substance on account of the difference between the soil and climate. We are exceptionally favoured in the soil?—That I don't know at all, because I am very doubtful of the bone of the cart horse beyond the thoroughbred horse. If you pluck off all the hair from the cart horse you can get plenty of thoroughbred that will measure as much as any cart horse. They won't have as big feet but their bone will really be as big.

799. Foreigners buy a lot of colts and fillies in the county for remounts. What price do they pay?—Well, I should think the average would be nearly £20 or £21. They buy them at from about £16 to £27 or £28.

800. Mostly by thoroughbred horses?—Yes, they have no objection if they are three year olds at the time.

801. You said that the best sire would be a thoroughbred, provided he had short legs and plenty of bones, which it is extremely hard to get?—Yes, it is hard to get. Failing to get them with big bone I would get them with well formed legs. If you mate him with a proper mare he may produce plenty of bone in his offspring.

802. Would you object to farmers in districts in which the mares are not suitable—suppose they put their mares to a thoroughbred and found the filly was light—would you object to them putting that filly to a half-bred horse? What would you get, if you talk of a horse that is passed by competent men as having sufficient blood in him, I think it might be very beneficial.

803. Don't you think it would be advisable in conjunction with a thoroughbred horse in a good many districts?—Yes, I think that might be very serviceable.

804. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Do you think there are as many horses bought by foreigners in your

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districts as there used to be?—I think there are quite as many.

805. Is there any improvement or deterioration in the soundness of the mares about you?—No, I don't think there is very much.

806. One way or the other?—I don't think there is any deterioration very much in the breeding of horses. I think Ireland produces as many good horses.

807. But in soundness?—There are certainly more horses rejected now than forty years ago, but I don't think there are so very much more unsound ones, but I think the veterinary surgeons find out things now that they did not know anything about before.

808. Breeders set more value now on breeding from sound stock?—Yes, they do.

809. You spoke of stallions in your district, and you approve of thoroughbred stallions for high-class carriage horses, and for hunters?—Yes.

810. Do you think the stallions could be improved?—I think they could.

811. A better class?—I think some of them are very good; but, as a rule, they could be very much improved.

812. There is room for a better class of stallion?—Yes.

813. Do you think the price of the stallion has very much to do in determining the farmers to which to send their mares?—I think very much.

814. You think that is the most important thing?—Yes, it is the most important thing.

815. LORD RATHDONNELL.—I think you stated you have several times ridden and driven Hackneys?—I did.

816. Were many of those that you rode or drove first-class animals, either prize winners or shown in show yards?—I cannot tell you about their being prize winners; they cost a good deal of money. It was in Suffolk, with my wife's uncle, with whom I used to spend a good deal of time. He gave a good price for them; he thought them wonderful.

817. What was your experience then—what would you say as regards their shape and action, first as regards riding and then as regards driving; say first as to riding?—Rather too much action, I think, for pleasant riding. They went up and down a lot, almost all of them I saw; they shook you about a good deal. My idea of a riding horse is a horse I could get up and sling along at eight or nine miles an hour, but I never saw one of them that I could ride three miles without giving them a good walk, and I was then a younger man than now. I had only seven miles to go from this old gentleman's place to my brother-in-law's place, and they certainly had not much beans in them coming back after that fourteen miles.

818. That was under the saddle?—Yes, but it was just the same with the harness. It was a heavy, sandy road, I grant you, in Suffolk. They went out of the yard in great courage always.

819. Mr. CAREW.—Is it not your experience of Hackneys that they lose their action after a certain time on the road?—Yes, after they cease to catch hold of their bit and throw the whip on them.

820. Is not the superiority of the Irish to the English horse due to the superior Irish blood?—In my opinion, entirely.

821. I think you said that you bred from two year old mares?—Yes.

822. What is your experience of breeding from them at that early age?—I think they are just as likely to produce a good animal without injury to the mare herself—I am talking of half-bred horses not race horses—as any other mare.

823. Would you give them a rest after the second foal?—No, I think if you want to keep them on for breeding you need not give them any rest at all.

824. If you did not want to keep them on for breeding, but wanted to turn them into harness horses or hunters?—I would not breed from her as a three year old. I would let her run on all that winter and breed her in the spring.

825. It would tend to weaken her?—Yes.

826. You said that the Royal Dublin Society has worked well and that with a little modification the old system if reverted to would be a great improvement?—I think it would.

827. What is the modification?—I would revert to the old system of subsidising mares. I am aware myself that the committee in my own county are of that opinion, and I believe they wrote to the Royal Dublin Society to that effect, because as Mr. O'Reilly so clearly put it, you get very nearly 50 per cent. more mares, at least you get 50 mares instead of 30—you enable 50 farmers instead of 30 to get their mares covered by a thoroughbred stallion.

828. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Talking of mares and the desire to keep good mares in the country you say you would give prizes to two year old mares stinted as three year olds?—Yes.

829. Would it not be better if you could increase the age and give a prize which would make it worth a man's while to keep his mare for a four year old with a foal at foot?—Yes, certainly.

830. If it could be carried out would not that be better than giving a prize for two year olds?—Yes, but my idea is to encourage them to put two year old mares to the horse. If they had a good foal from her they might be tempted to give her another chance. They might drift on to keeping a good well bred mare. It would be all the better if the money was there.

831. If it could be arranged to give a moderate premium for two year olds and a high premium to the four year olds it would carry the inducement still further?—Yes, and have a better effect.

832. Then, with regard to stallions, you spoke of a half-bred stallion, which we take to mean a horse with a stain in it—could you suggest any rule by which a horse of that class must qualify before he is admitted as a stallion?—Oh, yes; I should admit no horse of that sort except he passed a board of four or five really practical competent men. I think it would be very likely to have a most ruinous effect if you let a horse of that kind slip in without the greatest supervision.

833. Unless you actually knew his breeding?—Unless you knew all about him, and that he has no bad, dirty strain, like cart or Hackney blood.

834. With regard to the utility horse for the farmer, if he wanted to use him himself and also to get rid of him at a remunerative price, there have been discussions as to the class; and, putting the thoroughbred class aside, there are two or three classes which have been introduced into the country which are known, such as the Hackney, the Clydesdale, and the Shire horse. If you wanted a strong draught horse—I am speaking more or less personally, because I buy strong draught horses, and I cannot obtain them in Ireland—if you wanted what I would call a really high-class, active, agricultural horse, would it pay the farmer best to breed from the Hackney, the Clydesdale, or the Shire?—I should think from neither of the three.

835. But of the three?—None of the three. I should breed from a horse out of a strongish mare, with a certain amount of breeding in him. There are some of them in Ireland—what you call half-bred horses—strong, half-bred horses, out of an ordinary Irish cart mare—got by a thoroughbred horse with great size and bone, some of them.

The CHAIRMAN.—You didn't answer Major St. Quinton's question as to which of the three you would prefer.

Col. ST. QUINTIN.—He said he would not breed from any of them.

836. And weight?—And weight, as you say.

837. The CHAIRMAN.—Which of the three would you prefer, if you are confined to the three?—I should say the Cleveland, then, would be the better cross of the three, if you have to choose the least evil. I must

say the class of horse you talk of is a class of horse I never set my mind on breeding.

838. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—It is not bred in Ireland?—No.

839. I don't think you can breed him in Ireland?—No.

840. A great discussion has been apparently going on in reference to the Hackney horse—do you think that a cross of the Hackney, from his conformation and action, is likely to breed a horse that you can possibly ride or utilize as a hackney horse?—I don't think so at all.

841. Or as a heavy draught horse?—No. He has not size or depth for an agricultural horse, nor is he suitable for riding. The class of horse you talk of is not bred in Ireland. All Irishmen breed with a view of getting a hunter, or a harness horse, or, perhaps, a chaser. That is the ambition of every little farmer in Ireland if they can get money to send their mares to a thoroughbred horse.

842. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You describe the old Irish mare as a long, low, good looking animal, with good neck and shoulders, and good legs and feet. I suppose it is only from a sense of patriotism that you claim the title of an old Irish mare, it means nothing?—I think the type are still to be found in great numbers in Kerry, Cork, and Limerick, particularly where those three counties join. You see them going about with the old type of head, neck, and shoulders. They are not generally so nicely made behind, but they have all the characteristics. I think there are a great many of them left yet. They are bred in families from generation to generation. Somebody said that the Irishman does not keep up the breed to-day. My experience goes against that. I know scores of farmers that have the same breed in their families for generations, keeping on a mare always from the old stock.

843. Usually crossed with a thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

844. In answer to Mr. Fitzwilliam, you said you could buy a horse in England and that you could sell the same horse in Ireland for 40 per cent. more than you could in England owing to the prestige of the Irish horse. Do you mean by that only the prestige, or do you not mean the superior excellence?—I mean owing to the superior excellence of the Irish animal, because the Englishman has found it out.

845. It is really owing to excellence more than prestige?—Yes.

846. The excellence procures for it prestige?—Yes.

847. You say you think it would be advantageous to subsidize young mares with the view of inducing farmers to keep them to breed from, and that the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society would be best devoted to that purpose; but are you aware that the whole sum available by the Royal Dublin Society is only £3,200 a year, or £100 a year to each county in Ireland. Giving a prize of £10 to each young mare that could only subsidize ten young mares in each county?—I said if the Society had the money. I am not at all throwing a reflection on the Society for what they have done. That is the way for them to go I say if the money is there. If the money is not there, I think it would be better to subsidize the mares rather than the present system of giving prizes to mares and foals.

848. When you say subsidize you mean give them nominations?—Give them nominations as you did at first. I think the old system of giving nominations tended more to do good than the present.

849. You think it would be better to give £100 to fifty farmers than to give £100 to twenty farmers?—I do.

850. Mr. WRENCH.—You are only breeding thoroughbreds?—Yes.

851. Do you find that breeding thoroughbreds pays better than breeding half-breds?—Indeed, I do not.

852. You do it as an amusement?—Yes.

853. It has not paid nearly as well?—Up to the present it has not paid at all. I won't say that, for I have got £1,000 for a three-year old.

854. How long have you been breeding thoroughbreds?—It is only four years.

855. You have hardly had time to reap the results?—I hope I will.

856. Your land is some of the best in Ireland for horses?—I think it is.

857. Perhaps the best?—It is certainly the fact that every thoroughbred I breed has extraordinary bone.

858. That you attribute a great deal to the land?—A great deal to the land.

859. Is the experience you have had of Hackneys the personal experience confined to the Hackneys you rode belonging to your relative in Suffolk?—Except what I have seen in shows. My use of them were confined to these horses.

860. Do you know how they were bred?—I don't know.

861. You don't know whether they were Norfolk or Yorkshire?—I think they were both.

862. Were they pedigree horses?—I think they were.

863. Do you know by what stallion?—I don't. I know he gave £280 a piece for some of them.

864. It is possible they were not pure bred Hackneys?—It is quite possible. They were the usual type of Hackneys, quite as good looking as I have seen at these shows.

865. You have no particulars as to their pedigree?—No. I should not place much value on it if I had.

866. You would not place much reliance on a Hackney having two or three crosses of the thoroughbred?—The cross would be too extreme, and I don't think it could ever hit.

867. I mean a Hackney horse having two or three crosses of thoroughbred blood, you would not place any value on that?—I would much prefer him to one that had not.

868. Are you aware that a great many horses sold as Hackneys in Yorkshire have a large admixture of thoroughbred blood?—Yes.

869. You prefer that to not having any?—Yes.

870. You don't think the Hackney blood overmasters the thoroughbred blood?—No

871. You would modify your opinion of the Hackney if he had a good deal of thoroughbred blood?—It would make him better than if he had not. I am not narrowminded about Hackneys. If a man likes to make a fool of himself as I do breeding thoroughbreds, or if a man likes to amuse himself bringing over Hackneys, well and good. But I do think that where money has been given by the State, it is a great abuse to encourage the breeding of horses of that class. They may be very nice and very valuable. We know they have fetched great prices, though my impression is that the price is entirely going down, and that it will go down entirely. They are very nice to drive about, but they only tend to do injury to the breeding of high class hunters and harness horses.

872. You are speaking only from personal experience?—What can we speak from except personal experience?

873. It is rather a sweeping condemnation to talk of them as barndoor animals of no staying powers when you have only had experience in Suffolk?—I form my opinion from the type of animal I see at shows, that they are thoroughly unsuited to in any way improve the breed of hunters or high-class horses. If you ask Mr. Wimbush or Mr. —— where he gets his highest priced carriage horses he will tell you he gets them all from Ireland, and there is no Hackney blood in them.

874. At the same time you don't profess knowledge as to the breed of the Hackneys in Yorkshire?—Certainly not.

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875. You said you would register a certain class of horses with only a stain in their pedigree if they passed a competent Board?—Yes.

876. Do you think that those horses that have so much of the thoroughbred in them have any advantage over the pure thoroughbred horse?—No, if you could get a Stud Book horse with that strength.

877. Could you buy that horse cheaper?—You would have to breed that class of horse, I don't see where they are to be got now; a horse of type Lord Ashtown asked me about.

878. You don't know many of that class of horse?—Years ago there were a great many in the South of Ireland when men hunted them. Thirty years ago at Cahirmee Fair you would have forty or fifty hunter stallions there that covered in the season and were hunted all the winter.

879. There are few of those left?—Very few.

880. You would not register any horse with only a small stain, say one or two thoroughbred crosses and no matter how good his stock?—I would not.

881. You draw the line at horses with only a stain in their pedigree?—I say the great difficulty is to draw the line.

882. Would you follow the lines laid down by the Hunters Improvement Society in England?—Yes, I think I would.

883. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know what the lines laid down by the Hunters Improvement Society are?—I know their dams must have won races or something of that sort.

884. Or the dams' ancestors?—I remember when reading the qualification at the time that I considered they were well thought over.

885. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think it would be possible to obtain many reliable records about those old Irish mares?—Yes, if you had anybody that you could depend upon in the country. I think fictitious pedigrees are very rare myself. I have had over forty years experience buying and selling horses in large numbers and I never got a false pedigree but twice in my life.

886. You are pretty well known?—I am pretty well known. If you get a false pedigree somebody is sure to come and tell you; they did tell me and I took proceedings in both instances.

887. If the Royal Dublin Society had the funds at their disposal would it be worth their while to try and find out the records of those mares so that they could have the best knowledge?—To form a Hunters' Stud Book?

888. I would not go so far as that, but where any records could be found that they should be registered and kept—would it not put up the value of the breed?—It would be a hard thing to do and an expensive thing to do, and I don't know that it would repay for the trouble and expense.

889. Would not foreigners give more for animals if they knew their pedigree?—I don't think they would.

890. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—With regard to the breeding of mares that won prizes at the last Dublin show—I am sorry I have not the catalogue—there were larger prizes offered for brood mares than for any other class of animal, and yet that class was very meagrely filled, and there was no record with regard to the breeding of the animals. They would be what you term a heavy Irish mare, a strong Irish mare. The owners do not seem to know how the animals are bred—would it not be of great use to the country and to those who visit the show to know?—I cannot speak from experience, because I was judging another class. I have never been judging the mares, but I am always judging at the show. I think you have got pedigrees with some of the mares. I thought most of them did get their pedigrees in the catalogue.

891. Even in the three and four year old classes where there are 200 entries there are many of the mares whose pedigrees are unknown—is not that odd?—It is, I should have thought you would have had the pedigrees of most of them.

892. Is it not rather strange that the Royal Dublin Society should give large prizes without the name of the breeder being insisted upon?—I think it ought to be. If you get the sire and the dam you ought certainly tell where you got the mare.

893. It is a general topic of conversation with those who visit the Dublin show, this want of pedigree with regard to the breeding of Irish horses?—I think it would be better to have a mare entered without a pedigree than to give a pedigree without the name of the breeder. Of course if you give the pedigree without giving the name of the breeder you cannot prove anything.

894. You have ridden hunters that you class as not equal to the Irish horses. You seem to throw a doubt as to whether they are not bred from other blood, different from the way Irish hunters are bred—have you any knowledge at all as to the way those animals were bred?—I have only the knowledge that they were English bred ones.

895. I don't know of half a dozen breeders in England that breed except from hunter mares by a thoroughbred horse?—Then the question arises how were the hunting mares bred. I cannot tell you about that.

896. What is the extent of your experience about those inferior horses in England?—It was when hunting in Cheshire. I rode many of them. I should think sixteen or twenty years ago.

897. Was that the time you speak of as having been in Suffolk?—I have been in Suffolk a good deal since, I went to Suffolk every year.

898. You are not sure these animals you describe as Hackneys were not half-bred Suffolk horses?—Quite certain. He had three distinct breeds. He had Hackneys, Yorkshire mares, and Cleveland Bays. He had 120 brood mares on the farm.

899. Was it possible they were not in condition when you rode them, they were so soft that they took three hours to come back?—They were in fair condition enough.

900. I think you will admit that at a public inquiry, and in the case of a great authority like you making such statements, I should consider myself remiss unless I put these questions to you. It is a sweeping charge to bring against any particular breed of animal that it is soft, not useful for the purpose you speak of, not useful for a driving horse in comparison with the Irish horse?—What I call a driving horse is a horse you can drive for two or three hours at eight Irish miles an hour, that is ten English miles, and that he can keep on and come in and not mind it. I never saw any of them that could do anything like that.

901. That is the animal I select to drive. I drive a good many of them thirty miles to London, and I do not find that state of things. Some of them are Irish bred and some English bred. I never came across any of these soft animals. There was one remark you made, you said if two gentlemen were appointed to select the sire to put the mares to—don't it strike you that there would be some danger of putting too much responsibility into the hands of these two gentlemen?—How else can you have it. You cannot send a board of five or six all over Ireland, and as to appointing a different lot there is no responsibility at all, and I don't think you will get men capable of doing it if you say two men in one county and two men in another. I think the men you do get ought to be perfectly independent of the country.

902. The society would be to blame if those two gentlemen gave advice not remunerative to the breeder. It is always risky to say how a particular animal will breed. Don't you think they would be taking too serious a task even supposing they could find two gentlemen?—You know it is not compulsory

upon any man to send his mare if he does not like, and although breeding is uncertain, still if you mate a mare and a stallion properly they are more likely to produce a good animal than if not mated properly. If a mare is bad in one or two points I think it is a bad thing to give her a stallion having the same bad points. The only way you can do that is to have two good men. Great care should be taken in the men selected. They should know their business the men that do it. That is the most certain way. I think it would be a very good plan if it could be done.

903. CHAIRMAN.—You have had a very long and a large experience, speaking generally, but confining yourself to the hunters and high class harness horses you have spoken of, would you think there has been any deterioration in the quality during, say, the last twenty years?—Well I don't think there is, my lord, but it is the general opinion that there is, but I think there is not. People say it is impossible to find horses now. I think what leads people to say that is that there are twenty people looking for horses now for one looking for them thirty years ago. There were certain localities in Ireland where no one went then. There is hardly a district in Ireland now where dealers don't go.

904. The demand has very much increased?—Yes.

905. Increased much more largely than the supply?—Yes.

906. And the quality has not deteriorated?—There are as many good horses bred in Ireland as ever.

907. There are more horses bred?—There are more horses.

908. If the quality is maintained there ought to be very many more good horses?—Yes, there are more horses and coppers. Every county has two or three gentlemen who, more or less, deal in horses. That was not so twenty or thirty years ago.

909. What kind of horses are used for purely agricultural purposes in your part of the country?—Light, active horses. Heavy horses would not do. The farmers have such distances to draw their hay, and go to market, and draw their turf that heavy horses would not do. These little horses bring their ton-and-a-quarter or their ton-and-a-half along the road and think nothing of it.

910. Do you think the produce of the Hackney stallions of the Congested Districts Board have found their way into the county Clare?—A lot of foals came in last November, a drove of foals that came from Connemara. They said they were by them (the Congested Districts Boards' stallions), but I could not tell you. They sold for three and four pounds apiece. I know they were from Connemara. That is all I can tell you. They said they were by the stallions.

911. What became of them?—They were bought up by the little farmers at three and four pounds apiece.

912. Yearlings?—Oh no, foals. It has been a trade for a great many years. They drive them in droves of thirty or forty over the country selling them as they go along.

913. Have you any personal knowledge of the portions of the West under the Congested Districts Board?—Well, I know the Connemara pony—what used to be the Connemara pony. I have been through Connemara three or four times. It is a very beautiful country all through it, through the mountains, and I saw the animals there.

914. You never bought any?—Oh! I have had several Connemara ponies. I bought them for my children. I had them when my children were young. They were nice little animals. They had beautiful blood heads on them, rather plain behind, what we call cat-hammed, but good animals. I don't think you could breed anything but a pony in Connemara, you know. In fact I doubt if it would not pay the farmer better to have something else—mules, or something of that sort.

915. Mr. WRENCH.—Have the fairs at Spancilhill deteriorated very much during the last fifteen years?—No, there were a good many colts there this year.

916. It is much easier now to buy colts?—Colts are much cheaper.

917. There has been a fall in second class horses?—Certainly, or in third class horses.

918. While good horses are dearer than ever, third class horses are very much cheaper?—Yes.

919. Do you know if there is a Shire stallion standing in Ennis?—I don't know him.

Mr. WRENCH.—It is there.

920. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—The farmers who bought the foals at three and four pounds apiece have been in the habit of buying foals?—Yes, they come every year, droves of them. They come to the market place in Ennis and stand there two or three Saturdays.

921. What do they do with them?—They are bought by the small little jobbers living up in the hills, and they are bought by the shopkeepers in the town of Ennis who drive traps with them.

922. Do they use the fillies to breed from?—No, they are too small.

923. Lord ASHTOWN.—Do you notice an increase in the light weedy animals at the fairs you go to?—I do not know that there is so much of an increase in light horses.

924. Do you know what I mean—a light cheap class?—Yes, I really would not like to say because I do not look much at them. I look out for a different kind of horse.

925. Are there plenty of them about?—There are plenty of them about.

926. And also the other class, the nondescript hairy legged animal?—Yes.

927. Suppose a farmer has a mare that won't breed to a thoroughbred would you not sooner he bred with a half-bred horse?—You are putting me into a corner, asking me to decide between what I call evil.

928. It is rather hard to say that the farmer if he has a mare that will not breed a hunter should cut her throat?—You know that if he cannot breed to get a hunter or a good harness horse—if he does not breed that animal the animal he breeds won't pay.

929. I would like to see some sire that would give the farmer a chance?—I give him every chance. If you give the farmer a thoroughbred horse at the same price as you give the other horse very few of them will go away from the thoroughbred horse.

930. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know Mr. Martin Moylan; don't you know his Shire horse?—He told me he had no thoroughbred horse, he used to have two or three.

931. Do you know this Shire horse to be there?—I do not.

932. Don't you know he refused a big price for him?—I don't know anything about him. I know he has been asking me to get him a horse.

933. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything you would like to tell the Commission?—No, my lord. I am at your disposal. I will answer you anything I think I can with pleasure.

934. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you said if there was a small Board formed you would not object to it admitting certain half-bred horses as registered sires if passed by the Board?—If the Board was a competent Board.

935. I think that would rather answer Lord Ashtown's remark about the half-bred horses?—Yes.

936. The CHAIRMAN.—On that point you don't object in itself against certain half-bred horses or sires, but you think it necessary to draw the line somewhere. If the half-bred could be examined and passed by some competent authority you would not object to a horse so passed?—That is so.

937. Have you any idea of what the general value of a thoroughbred stallion in your district would be—the cost price?—Is it what they are worth?

938. What was given for them or what they are worth?—I should think there was not much given for

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what were bought—a big price has been offered for one. I think something like £100 apiece. There are some of them you would not like to give so much for.

939. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You would get a good one for £200?—Yes, if you went judiciously about it. They are a chance animal to buy. I would not like to take a contract to get ten good thoroughbred stallions for £2,000.

940. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Don't you think the thoroughbred horse to get hunters is a horse useless for racing—which is a bit too slow, and he is probably a big boned, short legged useful animal. He is the very horse you want to get into this district. If he is found as a two year old a little wanting in pace he is castrated and turned into a hunter?—Yes, very often. If you get that sort of horse and it is stated he is around, the foreigner steps in no matter how slow he is. I bought a horse at Newmarket and a foreigner offered me £300 profit on him the next morning, but I refused.

941. The CHAIRMAN.—You have not done that very often?—I was acting for the Royal Dublin Society. I am sorry since I did. The poor horse was killed on its way back. I was very near telegraphing to the Society to know what I would do.

Arthur Blennerhasset.

ARTHUR BLENNERHASSET, D.L., examined.

942. The CHAIRMAN.—You are resident in the county Kerry?—Yes, sir.

943. And a Deputy Lieutenant for the county?—Yes.

944. What part of the county do you live in?—Three miles from Tralee.

945. I suppose that part of the county is not in the congested districts?—No; it is not in the congested districts.

946. Are there many horses bred in that part of the county?—Yes, there are a good number.

947. Who are they bred by?—Bred by the farmers about.

948. Small farmers?—Yes, large and small.

949. What would be the usual size of the holdings and the condition of the people?—Well, the holdings are not very large about there.

950. Do you breed horses yourself?—Yes; I have for nearly the last twenty years.

951. What class of horses?—Well, latterly I have been breeding from thoroughbred horses altogether.

952. And what formerly?—I had formerly an American horse, an American trotter, and got rid of him; he was not at all suitable.

953. Mr. LATOUCHE.—Why?—Because his produce were no use at all; very bad.

954. The CHAIRMAN.—You are breeding from thoroughbreds?—Thoroughbred sires altogether.

955. And half-bred mares?—Half-bred mares.

956. You had an American horse of your own?—I had, he was a very fine horse, but the produce were very bad, indeed; they were not saleable, and the farmers about that bred from him did not at all like the produce—they could not sell them for any price at all.

957. What were they deficient in?—They had big heads and were slack in the loins, and bad looking horses altogether.

958. The sire was a good looking horse?—The sire was a very good looking horse, and a sound horse; but a great number of them came unsound, although the mares were sound in most cases.

959. In what way unsound?—They had curbs and spavins particularly.

960. Do you know how the horse was bred?—I bought him in America; he was in the American Trotting Stud Book, I believe.

961. Then you returned to the thoroughbred?—To the thoroughbred.

962. Have you a thoroughbred horse of your own?—I have.

963. What are the general kind of sires in your part of the country?—There are some thoroughbred horses; there are some cart horses and half-bred horses; very inferior half-bred sires.

964. What do you mean by cart horses?—Well, there are some Shire horses and Clydesdales.

965. Any Hackneys?—I believe there is a Hackney at Dingle and at Cahirciveen.

966. Well, Dingle and Cahirciveen would be some way from you?—Yes, it is a good distance.

967. Have you any personal knowledge of what they have produced, the Hackneys?—Well, I have seen some of the young ones sold. I saw some last August sold at Killorglin fair; the oldest, I think, was two years old, and they fetched wretched prices.

968. Fetched bad prices?—Very bad prices.

969. What kind of prices?—I saw the second prize yearling sold from Cahirciveen for £5 15*s.*, and I asked the price of a two-year old myself; the man asked me £7 10*s.*, I am sure he would have taken less.

970. I suppose you don't know at all what kind of mares they were?—No; I don't know what they were out of.

971. Were there many of them at Killorglin fair?—Well, I saw four or five myself. I was not looking for them.

972. And what is your experience, to come nearer home, of the produce of the Clydesdales?—Two come into Tralee, and stand in Tralee on every week for one day a week, and then the other days they stand at their owners' places.

973. What kind of mares are put to them?—All descriptions of mares.

974. And, as far as you can judge, with what results?—Well, I think, with bad results; the farmers prefer the thoroughbred horse, but they don't like paying the fee.

975. What are the fees charged for thoroughbred horses?—Three pounds, I think, is the fee for all thoroughbred horses about there.

976. What do they charge for these Cleveland horses?—I did not mention Cleveland, my lord, but Clydesdale, from 10*s.* up to 30*s.* for all the others, the half-bred ones and the cart horses, 5*s.* to £1.

977. Which do you find the farmers prefer, the half-bred or the cart horse, I think you said they charge the same fee?—About the same fee; I think they go mostly to the half-bred ones, they seem to think that the thoroughbred cart horse is too heavy.

978. What do they want for agricultural purposes?—They want a light horse.

979. I think you said there were two cart horse sires?—Two come into Tralee, but there are more about.

980. How long have they been in the country?—Well, these particular ones have been two or three years, I think, but there were other cart horses before that.

981. Then there must have been a certain amount of demand for them?—But I think they would always go to the thoroughbred horse if they could get him at the same figure.

982. Do you suppose that would apply equally to the Hackney?—How do you mean, my lord?

983. I mean if they could get the thoroughbred at the same fee as the Hackney, you think they would prefer the thoroughbred?—Oh, certainly.

984. Then you think the fee is a very important consideration?—I think it is; very, down there.

985. What kind of mares have you in your district generally?—Well, I generally notice they sell their best mares; they only seem to keep the ones they cannot sell.

986. Who do they sell them to?—Dealers come down to all the fairs; Castleisland is a large fair, you

see dealers from all parts of Ireland there, and foreigners buy horses there, too.

987. Do the foreigners buy through dealers, or by themselves?—I have seen them buy themselves there.

988. In your opinion, has the breed of hunters and horses of that class deteriorated in your district, or are there as many good horses produced as formerly?—No; I don't think there are as many good horses produced in Kerry as there used to be, and I think the reason is there is not so many thoroughbred sires as there used to be, and there are a great number of very bad worthless sires—common bred animals—that you really could not say what breed they were, a lot of these cart horses.

989. You have said just now that the farmers are very much inclined to sell their best mares, would not that have a very bad effect?—Oh, yes, I think that certainly has; if they could be induced to keep their good mares it would be a very great thing.

990. What would you suggest to improve the breed of horses?—If there is some inducement held out to the farmers to keep the good mares, and to have good thoroughbred stallions there, I think that would greatly improve the breed.

991. It would be impossible, would it not, for private enterprise to supply what you call a thoroughly satisfactory thoroughbred stallion at competing prices with the cart horse and others?—It would not pay anyone to have a good thoroughbred stallion down there, because they would always go to the cheap horse in preference.

992. Are the class of occupiers who breed unable to pay the money?—Some of them, I think, are unable, but there is a great number who could very well afford it.

993. They are tempted by the cheapness of the inferior horse?—That is it, I think.

994. Can you suggest any way of inducing them to keep their mares?—Well, I think if good prizes were given for young mares in foal, it might be some inducement—in foal to registered sires, and, I think, the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society of 1894—I think that was the year when mares were nominated—I think that was much better than we had for the last couple of years, that was when the mares were subsidised.

995. Do you know whether any recommendation to that effect has been made by any society in Kerry?—No, I cannot say; I am not on the committee myself.

996. I suppose there is a society of that kind, is there not?—Oh, yes.

997. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say you have been breeding horses about twenty years yourself?—Yes.

998. So that you ought to have a pretty good idea by this time what is the most paying horse to breed?—Yes.

999. And what class of mare would breed that horse?—Yes.

1000. Do you think the mares in your district are really capable of breeding horses that would pay the farmer if he put them to any sire?—I do; there are good, large mares about Tralee. Of course, in Cahirciveen and Dingle way, there are much smaller mares, but about Tralee it is very good land, limestone land.

1001. Is there much tillage?—There is a fair amount of tillage.

1002. And, I suppose, they want a light quality mare to work the land?—Yes, lightish.

1003. But you say the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, the first scheme, for nominations was the best, what is the reason that you think it was bettter to nominate the mares instead of giving prizes?—Well, because I think more mares used to go to these registered sires then.

1004. When they get nominations don't you think it helped the sire owner to keep a better sire, he got part of the fee?—Oh, it did, they don't send to the thoroughbred horse so much now at all, they go to the cheaper sire.

1005. In fact you think the old nominations cheapened the thoroughbred sires for the farmers?—Yes, it made them go to the good sires more than they do now.

1006. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Horse-breeding is a large industry in your district?—Yes, there is a good deal of it.

1007. But you say you have not a sufficient number of suitable stallions?—No, I don't think there are enough suitable horses in the county.

2008. Are there many of the old breed of mares there still?—There are some.

1009. They are diminishing?—They are, certainly.

1010. Have they been bought?—No, I think they are more dying out now.

1011. What class of horse do you mostly produce?—Hunting horses and harness horses.

1012. Which are the principal fairs with you?—Castleisland is a horse fair, there are two or three horse fairs in the year there, and Killorglin fair on the 11th August, that is I suppose the largest horse fair.

1013. What class of horses are sold at these fairs now, do you notice whether they are better than they used to be or worse?—Well, I don't think they are so good as they were fifteen years ago, but I think they are getting a little better again, the last few years they have been getting better.

1014. Is that owing to more care being taken in breeding horses?—I think this scheme of the Royal Dublin Society has helped the breeding down there a good deal.

1015. And you said that a good many horses are bought by foreigners at these fairs?—Yes, I have seen foreigners buying there.

1016. What kind of horses did they buy?—Well, the trooper class mostly, I think, and some better class.

1017. Are there many horses suitable for troopers produced down there?—Oh, yes, there are a good number, a good number of troopers bought in the county.

1018. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You said just now that you preferred the Royal Dublin Society's scheme of 1894, in which they nominated mares to stallions, to the present scheme?—Yes.

1019. What reason do you give for that?—Well, supposing the horse was standing at £3, the sire-owner was paid £2 by the Royal Dublin Society and the farmer had only to pay £1 for the service of the thoroughbred horse, now he has to pay £3 for the service of the thoroughbred, so he goes to the cheap horse and there is not so much breeding from thoroughbred horses as there was then.

1020. Then you have mare shows, don't you?—Yes.

1021. You give prizes there to mares?—We do.

1022. They are stinted to a registered stallion?—Yes.

1023. Did you have many mares at the last show?—No, we have not had many for the last couple of years.

1024. Not since this system came in?—No, we have had very few mares sent in for prizes, I don't think all the money was given away in prizes at all, there were not mares enough to give it to.

1025. Under the old system you mentioned £3 as the price of the stallion?—That is the price the stallions were in Kerry.

1026. And £2 went to the owner of the stallion?—From the Royal Dublin Society.

1027. And the owner of the mare had to pay £1; did you ever know that the stallion owner paid any of the £2 to the farmer, thus serving the mare for less money?—I have heard of it, but I have no proof of it in any way.

1028. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—You had a very celebrated breed of ponies in Kerry for many years?—Yes.

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Arthur Blennerhasset.

1029. In certain parts of Kerry?—Near Killorglin.

1030. Are they still in existence to the same extent as they were?—No, they are dying out altogether, you hardly ever see a pony there now.

1031. What has replaced them. Has any horse replaced them?—Well, there is a very mixed breed there now.

1032. But it used to be a very lucrative trade for the farmers who originally bred these ponies, was it not; they used to sell their ponies well?—Yes.

1033. What is their chief industry now. Do they breed other classes in their place?—I think they gave up the ponies, I don't know what they do instead. You see some small things, you cannot call them ponies, they are small horses that are very little value now.

1034. Would that country that used to produce these ponies produce anything better?—Well, where those ponies come from I don't think it would. I think the ponies are the most suitable thing for that part. It was from up in the mountains beyond Killorglin that those ponies used to come. It would not rear a horse.

1035. Mr. La Touche.—The part of Kerry you live in is not under the cognizance of the Congested Districts Board?—No.

1036. How far are you from a congested part?—Well, Dingle, I think, is the nearest to me.

1037. All to the west of you beyond Tralee?—That is the congested district.

1038. Are you acquainted with these parts of your county?—Well, no, I have not been much there.

1039. Have you been to Cahirciveen?—No, not lately.

1040. Do you know the part down south of you about Kenmare, Waterville, and Sneem?—No, I don't know that part.

1041. You have been engaged in horse breeding in the county Kerry for twenty years you say?—Yes.

1042. Are there many resident gentlemen in the county Kerry who carry on horse breeding?—No, very few.

1043. Do you know of any to the west of you?—No, I don't, but farmers breed there. Lord Castlerosse breeds horses now at Killarney for the last six or seven years.

1044. May I take it that you are probably the most western resident gentleman in Kerry who is engaged in horse breeding?—Yes, I should think I was, certainly.

1045. In fact there is no gentleman, no landed proprietor, who lives west of you?—Oh, there are, but they don't breed horses.

1046. Mr. Hurley, of Fenit, I suppose?—Yes, and Lord Ventry; he is at Dingle.

1047. He is south of you?—South-west.

1048. You say there are Hackney stallions, the property of the Congested Districts Board, at Dingle and Cahirciveen?—I believe there were last season.

1049. Do you know by whose recommendations those horses were sent down to your county?—No, I don't.

1050. Were you yourself consulted as to the most suitable horse to send down there?—No, I never heard anything about it.

1051. Are you aware who was responsible for the recommendation of the Hackney horse down in your county?—No, I am not.

1052. You said in answer to Col. St. Quinton that the breed of ponies that came down from the mountains near Killorglin had deteriorated?—They have gone out altogether, you hardly ever see a pony there now.

1053. I take it that that is owing to the use of improper stallions?—I think so.

1054. Is it your impression that the use of Hackney stallions is likely to restore the breed to its former condition?—No, certainly not.

1055. Do you think that a small short-legged thoroughbred horse put down into those parts of Kerry standing at 5*s*. a mare would be more calculated to improve the breed?—I certainly think it would.

1056. Do you think its stock would be able to exist?—I think the stock got by a thoroughbred horse would exist as well there as stock got by a Hackney; I think they would be just as hardy as if got by a Hackney.

1057. As a matter of fact the animals bred there in the western part of Kerry don't have to spend the winter there; they are generally sold as foals?—The greater part of them are; foals and yearlings.

1058. You yourself are not aware of any gentleman engaged in horse-breeding in Kerry who was consulted as to the best sort of stallions to be sent down there to improve the breed of horses?—No, I was not.

1059. Mr. Wrench.—That is rather a rash assertion of yours, that you think the produce of the thoroughbred would be equally well able to stand the climate and conditions of Kerry as the Hackney; you don't speak from experience, I suppose?—Well, I have never had Hackneys myself.

1060. You don't speak from personal experience?—No, certainly not.

1061. You have been breeding horses for the last twenty years; have you found it pay?—Yes; I did not find the American trotter pay.

1062. But since you have taken to thoroughbreds you have found it pay?—I have found it pay fairly well; Yes.

1063. Did you happen to be at the Agricultural Show at Tralee on the 14th?—I was.

1064. You were not judging, were you?—No, I was not.

1665. Did you see a class of colts under two years' old for which Colonel Crosbie gave a special cup?—I really did not; I was engaged at the jumping most of the time; I had not time to go; I had to go round with one of the judges who was not judging horses, and I really had not time to go through the horses properly at all; I had very short time.

1066. You did not see that class?—Yes, I did see it, but I did not take much notice of it.

1067. Do you know how many entries there were in it?—No, I don't.

1068. You don't know whether there were twelve or thirteen entries?—No.

1069. Do you know what won the first prize, and what was the reserve?—In the class for Col. Crosbie's cup I think the winner was by "Waterloo."

1070. And what was the reserve?—I don't know.

1071. You don't know that the reserve was by the Hackney stallion at Cahirciveen?—No; I don't.

1072. You are speaking, I suppose, of the district of Tralee?—Yes.

1073. I think you said that the farmers there would use a thoroughbred horse only that the lowest fees were £3?—Yes.

1074. Do you allude to the one horse that was registered under the Dublin Society's scheme?—No; there are three horses I think there registered.

1075. Do you know that for two of those their fees for farmers' half-bred mares go down to £1?—I am not aware of it.

1076. You don't know that it is on their posters?—No, I don't; they are not supposed to take less than £3.

1077. I suppose if they put it on their posters that is pretty good evidence that they do?—I have not seen the posters.

1078. The Chairman.—When you say that you think the produce of the thoroughbred is as well capable of standing the climate as the produce of the Hackney, of course you are speaking generally from what you know and have heard of the relative merits of the thoroughbred and the Hackney?—Yes, my lord.

1070. You think, in your opinion generally, the thoroughbred is as hardy and has as much stamina,

or more stamina, than the Hackney?—A great deal more stamina.

1080. You are not comparing any existing produce of thoroughbreds or Hackneys, because you have not had an opportunity of doing so?—No.

1081. Mr. La Touche.—Have you found the produce of the thoroughbred show any inability to stand the climate of Kerry?—No, I have not, personally.

1082. The Chairman.—Do you know how long the Hackneys have been standing in Kerry?—I believe the oldest produce is two years old.

1083. As a matter of fact, the climate, especially on the seaboard, is remarkably mild?—It is.

1084. Lord Ashtown.—At the last show of the Royal Dublin Society, I suppose you may take it for granted that the best farmers' mares from your district were at the show, at the show under the scheme?—No, I don't think so; the reason so few were at the last show was it was not advertised, and I did not know myself that there was going to be a show until the morning of the show.

1085. Poor entries?—Yes.

1086. Were the mares good or bad?—They were not good mares, and they did not send them in from a long distance.

1087. Were most of the mares you saw there suitable for breeding a valuable horse under the scheme?—Well, they were fairly, they were not high-class mares.

1088. They might produce a profitable horse?—Oh, yes, and some of them have.

1089. The Chairman.—I would like to ask you about the Kerry ponies that have disappeared, that is to say they have ceased to be ponies; is that owing, in any degree to absence of demand for them?—Well, no, I don't think it was. I think there used to be a good demand for them, but I think they got some of those bad sires down there, and tried to breed them bigger, and spoilt the breed.

1090. What did they want to breed them bigger for if they had a good demand for them?—Well, I don't know; I suppose they thought they would fetch more money, but they made a mistake.

1091. They have not succeeded?—No.

1092. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—Was that the effect, do you think, of trying an out-cross which did not succeed?—I think so.

1093. Trying a direct outcross which happened to turn out a failure?—They bred from much larger horses than they used to, and I think that spoiled the breed, and they were neither horse nor ponies.

1094. Lord Ashtown.—Half cart-horse and half pony?—That was about it.

The Commission adjourned.

THIRD DAY—THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22ND, 1896.

Oct. 22, 1896.

Present:—The Earl of Dunraven, K.P., in the Chair; The Hon. Henry W. Fitzwilliam, Lord Ashtown, Sir T. H. G. Esmonde, M.P., Lord Rathdonnell, Mr. J. L. Carew, M.P., Colonel St. Quinton, Mr. F. S. Wrench, and Sir Walter Gilbey.

Mr. Hugh Neville, Secretary, was in attendance.

Mr. Samuel Ussher Roberts, C.B., examined.

Samuel Ussher Roberts, C.B.

1095. The Chairman.—Mr. Roberts, you are a member of the Horse Breeding Association?—I am, my lord.

1096. Are you also a member of the council of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes, I am.

1097. And of the committee on Horse Breeding?—I am.

1098. Have you acted as judge in horse shows in Ireland?—I have for some years acted as judge in a great many provincial shows in Ireland.

1099. Have you acted in England at all as judge?—No.

1100. Are you personally interested in the subject of horse breeding—do you breed horses yourself?—I never have.

1101. When was the Irish Horse Breeding Association formed?—The Irish Horse Breeding Association was formed in the early part of August—that was the first time. Some gentlemen met together for the purpose of forming an association.

1102. Can you explain to us the object of the association?—The object of the association, at any rate at present, was to obtain evidence on the subject, generally, of horse breeding, and more particularly with regard to the effect which the introduction of Hackney sires would have in Ireland, and also to obtain the views of gentlemen interested in horse breeding in different parts of the country with a view to its being laid before you in such form as would secure your being thoroughly well informed on the subject.

1103. Does the association propose to make a report—to ask this Commission to receive a report?—We have not come to any determination on that. We have collected a large amount of information which we will be glad to place at your disposal; as to what else is to be done that will be a matter for consideration by and by.

1104. Are you in a position now to make us acquainted with the information?—Our secretary has all the information we got; he is here, and has it in a convenient form for the Commission.

1105. He is coming before us presently?—He will be before you to-day.

1106. Have you yourself a general knowledge of Ireland—the whole of it as regards horse breeding?—Yes, I have lived in Ireland—my life has been spent in Ireland, and in a great many different parts. I have taken a great interest in horse breeding; I am fond of horses, and since the Royal Dublin Society took steps with a view to the improvement of horse breeding I have taken a very active part in it.

1107. Would you be able to give us generally a description of the different types of horses bred in different parts of the country?—I think I may state that Ireland, in regard to horse breeding, is divided into three principal districts—one consists of the southern and western and midland counties, the other embraces the northern counties, and the third the western portions of the counties of Kerry, Galway, Mayo, and Sligo, and Donegal, perhaps.

1108. And how about the east?—I should have said the southern, and eastern, and midland districts; the northern districts and the western districts comprising part of Kerry, Galway, Mayo, Sligo, and Donegal.

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1109. How do you distinguish the different types of horses produced in these districts?—The first district I have referred to, that is what I may call the midland, southern and eastern counties, that is in reality the great horse breeding district of Ireland; it is to a great extent governed by the nature of its soil, and to a slight extent by the habits and pursuits of its people; that is the great horse breeding district, and it is in that district, with few exceptions, all the high class hunters, harness horses, and army remounts, which have made this country so well known as a horse breeding country, are bred. Of course there are exceptions; I am only speaking in a general way.

1110. What is the peculiarity of the soil?—It is the limestone soil that is so instrumental in producing good horses.

1111 As to the northern district?—In the northern district the breeding of horses is confined more to what may perhaps be roughly termed utility horses—that is horses for harness purposes and general agricultural and useful purposes; as a rule it is not a hunter breeding district, nor is it a district in which a high class of harness horses is bred.

1112. The western districts?—That is what I may call the pony district; there is a portion of it with which I had a good deal to do, and about which I am very well informed—I mean Connemara and a portion of Mayo; I lived for many years in the west of Galway—for five and twenty years—and there was at the time an extremely hardy wiry class of pony in the district, showing a great deal of the Barb or Arab blood. Without exception they were the best animals of their size I ever knew, good shoulders, good hard legs, good action, and great stamina. In the performance of my duties in the west of Ireland I have had occasion to drive long distances, and have always considered them the most wiry and useful animals I ever knew.

1113. What size?—They were seldom over 14.2; I never knew one of them to have a spavin or splint, or to be in any respect unsound in his wind.

1114. And you say there was Arab blood in them?—There was a strong trace of Arab blood which I always understood arose from the introduction, into Connemara, of the Barb or Arab by the Martin family many years ago; you could very easily trace it to the Connemara ponies at the time I speak of.

1115. That was probably the aboriginal horse crossed with Arab?—No, I have always understood that Colonel Martin, the owner of Ballinahinch, introduced Arabs and Barbs into the country with a view to improving the class of ponies and keeping up the breed; it certainly had that effect.

1116. To what do you attribute the difference in the types in these three districts?—In a great measure to the soil and climate, and to some extent the habits and pursuits of the people, and to the fact that in the southern, eastern and midland district you have numerous packs of hounds which induces farmers to breed hunters.

1117. Would you say taking it generally that these districts produce the type of horse which is best calculated to produce from the soil and climate?—I think so.

1118. And how about the sires in these different districts; do you think they are best suited for the requirements of the districts?—Well, the sires in the district which I have referred to, comprising the southern, eastern, and midland counties, include a very large number of good ones. I confine my observations to the sires on the register of the Royal Dublin Society; there are something approaching 250 sires on the society's register, and the greater number of these are stationed in the district I have referred to. Many of these horses are a very good class indeed, as good as money can buy; some are not so good and might be better. Outside that I think the class of sires is not good. I am of course speaking of thoroughbreds.

1119. That is to say that the sires put on the register are naturally the best?—We put no sire on the register that is not a good horse and calculated to improve the breed of horses; he may not be as good as we would wish, but if a sound horse, and we have got any information as to his stock being sound, we put him on the register.

1120. Do you know what proportion, taking the south and midlands, the other stallions bear to those on the register?—I could not say, my lord, in that particular district. We have, I think, something over 700 thoroughbred stallions in Ireland; I am afraid that may not be correct; as in the agricultural returns many are returned that are not thoroughbreds. The horses on the Dublin Society Register are all in Weatherby's Stud Book; that is the rule of the Society.

1121. Speaking for yourself would you have any objection to half-bred sires?—I do think there is a want in the country of other than the strictly speaking thoroughbred horse—I speak of that particular district I referred to comprising the southern, eastern and midland counties; of the farmers, I know a very large number of farmers are anxious to get a horse with more substance, bone, and size than the ordinary thoroughbred sire, and I do think a half-bred sire under certain restrictions might well be admitted on a separate register and recommended for the use of farmers throughout the district—something on the lines of the Hunters' Improvement Society in England might be followed in this country.

1122. Under what restrictions?—I certainly think they should have a good strain on the dam's side of pure blood, and be got by a thoroughbred horse.

1123. That would have to be determined by some authority?—That, and many other matters, if I may be permitted to make a suggestion, would have to be determined by some committee or board of men with sufficient funds at their disposal to employ a staff—a board in whose competency and knowledge the breeders throughout the country would have confidence.

1124. What are the steps taken by the Society now before a stallion is put on the register?—First of all as regards the soundness of the horse; we require the owner to produce the certificate of a qualified veterinary surgeon; then if we have any reason not to be satisfied with that certificate we send our own veterinary surgeon to examine him, and if the horse on further inspection is found to be sound we send our inspector to report upon the horse's suitability as a sire for producing the class of horses suitable for the district, and on receipt of that report we act. If further inquiry is necessary we have it made. But the committee specially appointed very carefully consider, not only the veterinary surgeons' certificates, but all the information from the county committee and otherwise as to the character and class of the stallion, and, in addition to that, our own inspector's reports on his examination of the horse.

1125. Then, on the whole, taking the southern, midland, and eastern districts I gather from you, you consider a thoroughbred sire, or properly selected half-bred sire with a considerable strain of pure blood on the mother's side, and of course by a thoroughbred sire, to be the most suitable description?—I think so. I think the farmers and horse breeders in that one district might be divided into three classes in considering this matter. There is one class of very small farmers who now breed a weedy worthless animal. I don't think that class of farmer ought to be encouraged to breed any class except what he requires for his own particular use. They breed a worthless class of animal that cannot be sold at any price that would repay them, and which remains on their hands for a considerable time, attended with heavy loss to them. I was lately in Cork during the

day of the great horse fair, and I stood at the entrance to the fair green in order to see the class of horses that went in, and I was astonished to see the amount of weedy worthless animals. I did not think there was such rubbish in the country; they cannot be sold; they are no advantage to the country; they require a certain amount of feeding, and the sooner they are put an end to the better for the country.

1126. That is the small class?—Yes; they cannot afford to pay for a good stallion, and they go to the cheapest horse they can get without regard to his qualifications, and don't very much care what class of animal they breed.

1127. Do you think they would continue to breed unless it paid them?—I don't think a man with a few acres of land has any right to breed horses.

1128. But probably it pays him?—I don't think it does.

1129. Then what would he breed for?—A man has a mare, and thinks that he ought to breed, but he will find if he keeps an account that he has not made anything by the progeny.

1130. Do you not think that evil, if it be an evil, is likely to cure itself?—I think it will, and I think it is curing itself now, but these wretched animals will remain in the country for a considerable time, because they will have to be hawked about from fair to fair before they are got rid of.

1131. What do you attribute their worthlessness to?—Breeding a bad class of animal.

1132. Do you attribute it more to the bad mare, or to the fact that the owner cannot afford to pay for a good sire?—He won't go to a good sire, and he has a bad mare to begin with.

1133. Do you mean he cannot afford?—Well, he is unwilling to spend the money; we have had a good horse at a very moderate service fee and a bad horse standing close to him, and the farmer has gone to the bad horse in order to save five shillings. Then there is the class of the well-to-do farmer, Class 2, who has, as a general rule, a good class of mare. I have seen at some shows a good class of mare exhibited, and have been surprised to find that farmers think it worth their while to send these mares to shows; the only object is to gain a prize, and I have been surprised that they sent their mares long distances for such a prize; the middle class farmers as a rule have a good class of mare—good, thick, short-legged mares, and breed a great many very good horses. Take Clonmel, the centre of the largest horse breeding district of Ireland. At their monthly fairs I think more horses are sold than at any other fair in Ireland, and a very good class of horses.

1134. What kind of size holding would they have?—A holding with a valuation of from £100 to £200.

1135. Do they keep mares specially for breeding?—Many of them do; they all work their mares: they are men whom I think make it an object to breed a good class of horse, and know that if they fail to produce a good class for hunter or harness purposes very likely the misfit will fall in for some other purpose. The object ought to be to aim at breeding a good horse, and if not quite successful having made that attempt they will find that the misfit will be good for other purposes and that they will get a price for it that will pay them, and where they succeed in breeding a plum it pays remarkably well.

1136. Do these class of men in your opinion avail themselves of the services of the best stallion they can get?—A great many of them do, but a great many of them go to a cheap horse. As a rule, however, that class of farmer is anxious to get a good stallion.

1137. At what age do they sell them?—Two years up to four, but it is very seldom they keep a horse up to four. Three years is the age at which they are looked for by the English dealers.

1138. Do they treat them properly as foals?—In that country they are fairly cared and fairly fed.

1139. Well, then you come to another class?—Yes, the third class. The third class would be composed of the larger farmers and gentlemen who breed horses in the country, and they of course aim at breeding the highest class of horse they can for either hunter or harness horse, and it is for the horses they breed that Ireland enjoys such a high character for her horses; they can afford to keep a good mare and go to the best stallion, and also keep the young stock well.

1140. Is all this district you speak of sufficiently supplied with suitable thoroughbred stallions?—I don't think it is: there are many parts where they are badly in want of a good stallion. The Royal Dublin Society have endeavoured so far as they have means to meet that want; they have in several cases when funds were available applied them to the purchase of stallions and resold them on the instalment principle to persons living in the district; the principle they have gone upon is to secure a good horse for the district though it may be attended with considerable loss in recouping the purchase money. For instance, we bought "Hartstown" the other day and paid £400 for him; he is a beautiful horse and could carry 16 stone with hounds; we gave £400 and we sold him for £300, making it a condition until the £300 was repaid his services were to be given to a certain number of farmers' mares at a fee of £3, thus securing him to the farmers at a moderate cost.

1141. Did the Society select the mares?—No.

1142. How was that done?—In the Dublin Society's scheme for horse breeding now there is no selection of mares; the money is given in prizes to young stock.

1143. I understood you to say you made it a condition that he was to serve a certain number of mares at £3?—They did not select the mares; that was left quite open to the farmers of the district.

1144. First come first served?—Well, of course the stallion owner is anxious to try and get as good mares as he can.

1145. Do you know what fee was charged for that horse?—£3.

1146. I don't quite understand, you made it a condition that he was to serve a certain number of mares each year?—Yes, and beyond that he was not controlled as to price.

1147. What would he ordinarily stand at?—He is a horse that would ordinarily stand at £5, and for thoroughbreds £15 or £20; he was quite that class of horse.

1148. You made it a condition that he was not to charge more than £3 until the purchase-money was repaid?—Yes, that he was to serve farmers' mares at a fee of £3 until the purchase-money was repaid; he then became the property of the owner, and we did not make any further conditions after that.

1149. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What was the name of horse?—Hartstown.

1150. The CHAIRMAN.—In this district do you know any other sires—Hackneys or Clevelands?—There are a good many half-bred horses that have got good stock that stand in that district. There is a horse called "Mackintosh" in the county of Limerick; he is not in the Stud Book: he is a highly bred animal, and has got more valuable horses than any other half-bred horse in Ireland probably.

1151. I was not talking so much in that sense, but as to whether there were any pure Hackney or cart stallions in this district?—No, I don't think so.

1152. Do you think that in this southern, eastern and midland district the introduction of Clydesdales and Clevelands would be a benefit?—I think it would ruin the horse breeding in that district.

1153. On what do you found that opinion?—My objection to Hackneys is this, that I think they are

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unsuited to produce either hunters or high-class harness horses; I think it ought to be the aim of every one to produce one or the other, and I think that a Hackney is wholly unsuited to produce one or the other.

1154. Do you form that opinion from experience?—I never owned a Hackney; my knowledge is observation and information collected from various sources from time to time; I may say with regard to collecting information, that we have received several communications on the subject, extracts from which I will read if I may be permitted to do so.

1155. Would that come better from the secretary?—Very well, my lord.

1156. As you have just mentioned high-class harness horses, I think we had it stated in evidence the other day by Mr. O'Reilly, that there was no special class for stallions calculated to get harness horses given at the Royal Dublin Society's Shows, and I see, on looking at the catalogue, that Class 1 is for "thoroughbred stallions under thirteen years old, to get weight-carrying hunters or high-class harness horses." That, I presume, is correct?—We hold that a thoroughbred horse is suited in every respect to get high-class harness horses. As a matter of fact, a very large number of the harness horses that go to London are from thoroughbreds with half-bred mares; we have the evidence of the London dealers that the best carriage horses they get, the three-year old colts they buy in Ireland, are the produce of a thoroughbred horse out of a half-bred mare.

1157. Then I am correct, I think, in saying that this complaint that was made that there was no class for stallions calculated to get harness horses was not quite correct?—No, it was not.

1158. It would only be correct to say that there was no class exclusively for stallions likely to produce harness horses?—Yes, the wording of that class was put in after very careful consideration by the committee.

1159. Speaking of the southern, midland, and eastern counties, and of the stock bred by the strong farmers, and so on, I suppose the majority of them sell as hunters?—No, I should say that probably quite as many of them are sold for harness horses as hunters—I should think quite as many.

1160. Mr. WRENCH.—Is that Class 3 or 2?—Oh, Class 2; Class 1 comprises all the horses whose throats I said ought to be cut.

1161. Class 2 or 3 I said?—Class 2 I am speaking of.

1162. The CHAIRMAN.—You think as many are sold for hunters as for harness?—I think so. I have seen at Cahirmee fair collections of colts, three or four years old, quite as numerous as the hunters that went out of the fair, and magnificent horses they were—chiefly brown horses, standing 16 hands high.

1163. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—The registered stallions chosen by the Royal Dublin Society, are they chosen in the main with a view to the breeding of general purpose animals or hunters?—General purpose animals, that is the object.

1164. Can you tell us how the mares are bred in these classes 2 and 3?—No, I could not tell; I have got no information as to that, but as a general rule they are well bred half-bred mares.

1165. No mixture of cart blood of any kind?—They are free as a rule from any appearance of cart blood.

1166. Also those half-bred horses you have named, they are bred almost in the same way as the mares—mainly thoroughbred?—That is the half-bred I recommend.

1167. You say there are a good number in the country?—Yes, very well bred horses that have probably three or four strains of pure blood on the dam side, and got by a thoroughbred horse, some probably not as well bred, and many others perhaps very nearly thoroughbred.

1168. Lord ASHTOWN.—Do you include in that district any of the western counties?—Part of Galway—the east part.

1169. And I suppose Roscommon?—Yes, a certain part of that, and a part of Sligo.

1170. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—You said you thought small farmers could not breed horses at a profit. Would you fix any limit to the size of the farm on which farmers could breed with profit?—It very much depends on the character of the land, but I think a farmer holding a farm valued under £20 has no business breeding.

1171. But a man above that might?—I think so.

1172. Do you think that good stallions at a cheap rate would be a help to small farmers?—They would do better than they are doing, but I don't think you can expect to get a good class of animal bred by that class of man; heretofore there has been a market for what I might call the utility horse, but I think that market is disappearing rapidly—the bicycle and the motor car will do away with it altogether, and they will become a drug in the market.

1173. You think high class horses will only pay in future?—Every breeder ought to aim at breeding the best horse he can; if he does not quite succeed the misfit will come in for some lower purpose.

1174. Speaking of brood mares do you approve of the system of selection?—Oh, certainly, if you have the means of doing it. I think wherever public money is given to provide a stallion for a district there ought to be concurrently a means of selecting the mares to be served by that horse.

1175. That is the system of the Congested Districts Board—they select the mares?—That is the right system, no doubt.

1176. Have you come across any specimens of the old Irish mare?—Yes, I have, numbers of them in different parts of the country.

1177. Has any record of pedigree been kept?—I never heard; I do recollect the county of Waterford being famous for that class of old Irish mare—strong mare with plenty of substance, short legged, good action, plenty of stamina.

1178. Do you find there are fewer or more?—I could not say, but I think there are quite as many; there are a great many farmers who try to keep on the old blood, and do keep the same blood in their families for many years.

1179. A good deal of care is taken then of pedigree?—Some take a great deal of care of it.

1180. Colonel St. QUINTON.—I should like to ask you what is your objection to the Hackney as a sire for a horse of this particular breed—do you consider that the conformation of the Hackney is an inferior conformation?—I do for the hunter or high class carriage horse.

1181. Do you consider his action is a true action and a useful action?—I do not.

1182. Do you think the introduction of that conformation and action would benefit the riding class?—I am sure it would ruin it.

1183. Do you think it would benefit the driving class—the hackney car class?—I am sure it would not.

1184. Mr. WRENCH.—You said that under careful conditions you would register some so-called half-bred sires, would you register any of these until their stock was proved to be good?—I would; if the horse is well bred, if his conformation is good, and if I thought that in every other respect he was calculated to get good stock. If he did not turn out all right I would get rid of him.

1185. What would you call sufficiently near a thoroughbred—how many crosses?—I think there ought to be at least three crosses; it would be a very exceptional case where you would be justified in admitting a horse with less than three crosses.

1186. You have stated that in your opinion Hackneys cannot produce high class harness horses?—That is my opinion.

1187. You have been at the Royal Dublin Society's Shows?—Yes.

1188. Do you know how the animals are bred that win the chief number of prizes?—Yes.

1189. Can you give us that in formation?—I cannot.

1190. You have got no statistics—were any got by Hackney sires?—Yes, some of them were, Mr. Power's horses for instance, and some English horses. I have no doubt that for show purposes the Hackneys do very well; they win prizes, but in my opinion their utility ends there.

1191. You have no personal experience of Hackneys?—No, but at the time when there was a warm debate about the introduction of prizes for Hackney sires I made careful inquiries and was in hopes that we would have been able to admit them into our show and safeguard ourselves. I came to the conclusion that that was impossible and from that out I have endeavoured to prevent prizes being given for them.

1192. Do you condemn all Hackneys?—Some Hackneys are very good horses.

1193. And have staying blood in them?—Yes.

1194. And their action is not pounding action but from the shoulder?—Yes.

1195. In the class for stallions in the show, although it includes animals that can produce weight-carrying hunters and harness horses, it is confined to thoroughbred sires?—Yes.

1196. There are no prizes for sires except thoroughbreds?—That is so.

1197. With regard to class No. 1, you would cut the throats of all the mares that class includes. Do you think that a practical way of getting rid of them?—Well, I did not mean that in its absolute sense, but I do think that the men who breed them do no good to themselves or to anybody else.

1198. Do you think there is any likelihood of our getting them to give up breeding?—They will very soon get tired of it, there has been up to lately a sale for almost any class of horse you could produce in Ireland, that is lessening by degrees, and I am quite sure that the sale for the class of horses that those men breed will disappear altogether, there will be no sale for them at a price that will pay the cost of breeding.

1199. You are sure of that?—I could not be sure, that is my opinion.

1200. Did you hear the statistics given that the breeding had apparently increased in those counties?—I can quite realise that breeding is increasing.

1201. Increasing in the western counties as opposed to the others?—I am not speaking of those.

1202. But there are small farmers in the west?—I am not speaking of the west.

1203. The CHAIRMAN. — We are confining our observations to the first district he mentioned, the south and east.

1204. Mr. WRENCH.—Then you said you thought that in the districts you were referring to and having regard to classes 2 and 3 that the introduction of Clydesdale or Shire or any other coarse blood would really ruin the breeding of those horses?—That is my opinion.

1205. And if it should happen to be the case that in those districts there is already a large introduction of Clydesdale and coarse draught blood, don't you think it shows that these people, who have good Irish mares, are able to keep to the right strain, and keep their animals good?—In my opinion it shows an enormous amount of damage has been done already.

1206. I thought you said there were as many of the good old Irish mares now as ever?—Yes, but I don't think of crossing those mares with Hackneys or Clydesdales.

1207. I am not asking you that, I merely say if that blood has been introduced and done no harm, is it not evidence that these men are able to take care of themselves?—I don't admit that it has done no harm, but the class would be better if those animals were not in the district.

1208. You admit that there are some animals of that kind in that district?—I don't know. I cannot speak of them.

1209. Sir W. GILBEY.—You mentioned thoroughbred sires serving half-bred mares, and producing good harness horses, could you give a definition of a half-bred mare?—A half-bred mare is a mare got by a thoroughbred horse out of a half-bred mare, she is still termed a half-bred animal, she may have more than one strain of pure blood in her on the dam side, but there is no definition of a half-bred mare as to the number of crosses of purebred blood.

1210. You cannot define how this half-bred animal is bred that you describe as a suitable animal to produce harness horses?—No.

1211. In the Dublin Show I see Class 5 "Mares calculated to produce weight-carrying hunters or high class harness horses," did you see that class?—No.

1213. Although large prizes were offered, there were only 15 entries, and I am curious to observe here that out of the fifteen entries there are only about four animals of which the pedigree is given at all, and there are some of them "Breeders unknown" and "Pedigree unknown." Is not that a misfortune?—It is a fault, and the Dublin Society has proposed to correct that in future; it will not give the breeding of any horse unless the name of the breeder is given.

1214. I think the Dublin Society has been doing an immense deal of good, don't you think if they were to encourage in some way the particulars of the breeding of these animals that come to the show being given, I think you will be able to get that information?—I think it very important.

1215. You mention Inspectors appointed by the Dublin Society. What positions do these gentlemen hold? Are they veterinary surgeons?—No. We have veterinary surgeons to examine for soundness, but we have not veterinary surgeons to examine as to conformation. We send out men of experience and we get them to examine the sires as to conformation and action.

1216. Did you mention Inspectors for certain districts?—No; we have only one Inspector, our extent of registration has been very small up to this.

1217. He lives in Dublin?—He lives near Dublin.

1218. I take it from the answer to Mr. Wrench that you have no experience of the breeding mares of the description exhibited in this class—mares calculated to produce harness horses—you have no experience of breeding any other than by thoroughbred horses?—No.

1219. The CHAIRMAN.—In the district you are speaking of what is the general character of the horses used for purely agricultural purposes?—They are what are called, roughly speaking, light half-bred horses. In that district for agricultural purposes there are very few Shire horses used. They are chiefly the Irish half-bred mares that are used for agricultural purposes.

1220. In your opinion are they the best suited for agricultural purposes?—I think they are for agricultural purposes in Ireland.

1221. They don't require very heavy horses in Ireland?—No, I don't think the heavy horse is suited for agricultural purposes in Ireland.

1222. In this district do you think there is any tendency on the part of the farmers to sell their mares out of the country to an extent that is injurious?—A great number do sell them to an extent that is injurious. The foreign buyers have been picking up a great deal of very good mares throughout this district.

1223. Can you suggest any way in which that might be checked?—Well, there is a way I propose to suggest later on.

1224. Perhaps we will take it later on. It would come on the general question?—Yes.

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1225. I don't quite understand what you said in reply to Mr. Wrench. Do you know whether any Hackney stallions have been used in this southern, midland, and eastern district?—I don't know any. I know there are Hackney stallions in it.

1226. You know there are?—There are.

1226A. You don't know what they are?—No.

1227. Nor where they are?—No.

1228. I think you said they had already produced some harm?—I did.

1229. How did you detect that?—I merely gave that as my opinion. I have no way of detecting it.

1230. Do you think harm has been done because you know the fact that these stallions that you disapprove of are there, or have you any demonstration of it?—I have no demonstration of it.

1231. You believe the Hackney is injurious, and, as the Hackney is there, you are quite sure harm must be done?—Yes; it is the inference I draw.

1232. Now, turn to one of the other districts—the northern or western?—The western district—that is where the ponies are. This district is altogether suited for breeding ponies—district No. 3, the western district. It is a mountainy district, a poor soil, and a rather bad climate, and that, I think, is suited only for ponies.

1233. That, I understand, covers the whole of the west?—It is pretty nearly the whole of the west, taking it up from Kerry; it does not take in Clare, but it takes in the whole of the western part of Galway and Mayo. That is the district I have the most information about.

1234. Now, this district is only adapted to raise ponies?—Altogether adapted to raising ponies, and no other class of horse, I think.

1235. We had evidence the other day that in Kerry the class of ponies disappeared altogether?—Yes, I am aware of it.

1236. That is to say, the ponies disappeared, and a larger animal was produced, not nearly so valuable as the pony—isn't that so?—I think so.

1237. Do you know what they were crossed with?—I don't know.

1238. Your experience of the western part of the country extends over a great number of years?—It does.

1239. For about how long?—I have known Galway and Mayo since the year 1850 very well.

1240. Is there any marked change in the character of the ponies produced there in the last thirty years?—Oh, yes. Up to the time I left Galway, in 1874 or 1875, the ponies of that western district had deteriorated very much indeed.

1241. Mr. WRENCH.—From 1850?—From 1850.

1242. The CHAIRMAN.—Up to what time?—Up to 1875; up to the time when I left Galway.

1243. To what do you attribute that?—This was attributable to the want of good stallions. The stallions they used were bad, what is called a mongrel stallion, and I attribute the deterioration in the quality of the animals altogether to that.

1244. The stallions were inferior to those used formerly?—They were inferior. The Arab blood died out and they were breeding from stallions bred in the district and without any care.

1245. Your practical knowledge of that part of the country ceased in 1875?—Yes.

1246. What class of stallion do you think best suited for all that part of the country?—I think for the greater portion I would fall back on what produced the good animals before, that is the Barb or the Arab. I think for certain parts of the district the Welsh pony would be the hardier animal and more suitable, but I think for the other portions of the district either the Arab or the Barb or a small thoroughbred shortlegged horse would be best suited for the district.

1247. In your experience were many ponies sold out of this district?—Yes, very large quantities of them were sold out of the district in my time; you could see droves of ponies going through the midland counties—a hundred or two hundred of them—bought at the fairs of Oughterard, Clifden, Westport, and other places, and taken up by hawkers and driven through Ireland and sold as best they could.

1248. They remained in Ireland?—A great many of them went to England, and a great many of them went to the coal mines.

1249. For work underground?—Underground.

1250. Do you know whether the same quantities of them are sold now?—I can't say, but if the same number are bred now they must be sold, because I don't think the country could support them.

1251. Well, of course you have not any practical knowledge of that part of the country since the establishment of the Congested Districts Board?—No, I know nothing of it.

1252. And you cannot tell us from your practical knowledge what effect the Hackney has had there?—No.

1253. From your general knowledge do you think the Hackney would be suitable to cross with these ponies?—No, I don't think it is. The Hackney is not a suitable sire to cross with ponies.

1254. They don't produce as valuable produce?—No, I am sure the produce which will find its way into the midland counties and other horse breeding districts, and will be bought, perhaps, by the small farmers there, and when turned out on good land and grow to size and well fed will make its way and be used as brood mares for breeding hunters or carriage horses, and that will tell on the breed of these animals. That, to my mind, is the great danger of introducing the Hackney blood, for you cannot by any means prevent it from permeating to those districts in Ireland where horses of the well-bred class are bred. Of course if it were possible to build a wall around them in a certain district and leave the Hackney there, then they will do no harm.

1255. Mr. WRENCH.—Are you quite sure they would not jump the wall?—We have heard of their fencing powers.

1256. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you think Hackney blood would improve ponies?—I don't think it is the right way to improve them. I am quite sure the Barb or the Arab will produce better animals off ponies. I saw instances of it. I was judging at Hollymount Show, and I saw a very beautiful pony mare, just such an animal as I describe, good shoulders, good hard legs, and good feet, and all the appearance of a hardy, wiry animal, with great stamina, and showed a great deal of breeding. She had a two year old and a yearling got by a Hackney sire. They were as bad a stamp of young horses as ever I saw. They were hairy-legged, and they had no redeeming feature that I could see.

1257. When was this?—This year.

1258. You can give us the name of the man?—I cannot give the name of the man, but it is a bay filly by "Fireaway," an animal owned by the Congested Districts Board.

1259. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—What sort of action had those two animals?—Nothing peculiar as to action.

1260. The action was not good?—No.

1261. The CHAIRMAN.—Although you said you had no recent experience of these western districts you have still some practical experience of the produce of a Hackney stallion there?—Oh, yes; I go very frequently through the country. I have some knowledge of it, and I have judged at the shows at Galway and Hollymount.

1262. Can you give us any more information upon that subject, as I thought you were speaking purely theoretically, and that you had not seen the produce of Hackney sires?—These are the only ones that I can call to mind. These are the only cases I saw.

1263. Mr. WRENCH.—A two-year-old and a yearling?—Yes.

1264. Mr. FITZWILLIAM—These ponies bred in this district, I believe they go by the name of Connemara ponies?—Yes.

1265. Can you describe them a little. Were they light, active riding ponies?—Yes, they were charming animals to ride, full of action and plenty of vigour, just a charming covert hack.

1266. And they were very well bred?—Yes. All those in the district were well bred and showed a great deal of quality. I may say that I bought numbers of them for friends of mine, numbers of them passed through my hands. I seldom drove anything but a Connemara pony, and I had occasion to drive thousands of miles every year while I was there.

1267. You believe they were mainly bred either by thoroughbred or Barb or Arab blood?—They were bred by sires, the produce of sires originally got by Arab or Barb blood.

1268. You spoke about the introduction of Barb or Arab blood by Colonel Martin?—Yes.

1269. When was that?—Ever so many years ago, before I went to the West. It must have been twenty years before I went to the West.

1270. Mr. WRENCH.—Was it in 1833?—Yes, that is about what I say. You could trace it distinctly in all the better class of ponies.

1271. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I think you said of late years the pony deteriorated?—Oh! yes, very much deteriorated.

1272. What would you do by way of renovating the breed and setting it up again?—I would introduce a similar stallion to that which produced the good breed I speak of in the district, that is, a good Arab or Barb stallion, and in the very remote exposed districts the Welsh pony would be a hardier animal. Perhaps in other districts where there is better feeding and probably better-to-do people live, I think the native small breed of pony horse—a short-legged pony horse—would be the best.

1273. Do you believe there are mares in that country still that are worth breeding from?—The mares have greatly deteriorated, and it will be many years before the stock is got up again.

1274. Are there many farmers who have kept any old records of their own particular breeds for generations?—I don't think so.

1275. Lord ASHTOWN.—Suppose the Hackney breed cross with ponies proved more profitable to the farmers than by other sires would you prevent them using Hackney sires on this principle:—that you fear the blood would go through the east or No. 1 district?—I dare say the Hackney stallion would produce more profit for the farmer, because the service of the Hackney stallion is given to the tenant free of cost, it may produce more profit than he would have from a mongrel stallion for which he would very likely have to pay 7*s.* 6*d.* or 10*s.*

1276. Those Hackney stallions serve at 5*s.*, and would you deprive the farmer of the use of them, although the profit from them may be more, for fear the blood from that district would go through district No. 1?—I don't think it is a wise policy to benefit one particular district at the expense of the Government when it would probably have the effect of injuring another district where Government aid is not sought in developing that industry.

1277. You think it would injure No. 1?—Yes.

1278. Would not that be due to the carelessness of the farmer in not looking for the pedigree of the animal he buys?—You cannot do that. Unfortunately they do not very much care. They do not show much judgment in what they buy.

1279. What do you say as to the registration of mares?—I would not register mares at all; I think it is impossible. I think if the registration of stallions is carried out, and a selection made of mares for the stallions it will produce great good; I think it is all that can be done.

1280. But there is no guarantee of the young stock being got by a proper stallion, you cannot point to a book and say "Here is stock free from every taint on either side"?—It is a rather curious thing in this country, but there is no disposition on the part of the farmer to give a wrong pedigree of his horse.

1281. You are quite right?—Yes, it is very rare. I have great confidence if I go to a fair or go to a farmer's place to buy a horse. I have much confidence in what he tells me about the pedigree of the animal. I don't mean that if the horse crosses to the other side of the water that the pedigree sticks to him, but so far as I am concerned there would be no attempt on the part of the farmer to conceal the pedigree.

1282. But there is no check on him, and he may do it, and the only way to prevent it is to register the mares?—To register the mares is a big and a costly business. To produce the register at first would cost a good deal, but it is no use unless it is kept up from year to year, at great expense.

1283. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—It is a question of money, more than anything else?—Everything connected with the improvement of horse-breeding is a question of money. You cannot expect to improve or suggest any means of improving the breed of horses that does not raise a question of money.

1284. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You said that in the case of the registration of sires by the Royal Dublin Society the sires were examined by veterinary surgeons as to soundness?—I said that the applicant for registering a stallion, when he offers his horse for registration, sends a certificate by a qualified veterinary surgeon as to the horse's soundness, if he has one; and, if the committee are not satisfied with the certificate, they have the horse examined by their veterinary surgeon. They require to be reasonably satisfied that the horse is sound before they register him.

1285. Can you tell us whether the Hackney stallions serving in the western districts undergo such an examination?—No; I don't know anything about it.

1286. From your experience of the Hackney stallions and their young stock, would you say you think them a pretty sound breed, from the young stock you have seen in the West?—I have not seen much of the young stock. I cannot give an opinion on that matter.

1287. Are you aware that any experts or practical breeders in the West of Ireland, or elsewhere in Ireland, have been consulted as to the advisability of starting Hackney stallions in the West of Ireland?—I am not aware. I recollect being asked my opinion at the time, before anything was done, and I gave the same opinion that I have now expressed.

1288. Mr. WRENCH.—With reference to Connemara?—Yes.

1289. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Do you think from the character of the country with which you are perfectly conversant, that a better industry might be produced, if it were possible, by the breeding of mules than anything else. Wouldn't it carry mules, and would not a mule of the higher breed pay better than the pony?—I daresay it would, but it is a strange thing, I don't think I ever saw a mule in the western part of Ireland.

1290. With this breed of pony you would get a very good mule?—Yes.

1291. And you couldn't get a horse?—Yes.

1292. Mr. WRENCH.—I think your chief experience was rather in Connemara, or Galway; that was the district you knew best?—Yes, and part of Mayo.

1293. You knew that district thoroughly?—Yes.

1294. And that is the district that you think is best suited for breeding ponies?—Yes.

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1295. Were most of the animals in your time sold as foals?—They were always as foals. Well, not as foals, they were sold as yearlings and two year olds.

1296. They were kept only up to two years old at that time?—Yes.

1297. That was prior to 1875?—Yes.

1298. You know the pony foal is a small animal?—Yes.

1299. You and I may not agree about Hackneys altogether, but I think you will agree with what we have chiefly stationed in the best districts of Connemara. Cashel is one of the best districts?—Yes.

1300. And we have stationed a Barb there?—Yes.

1301. And we have also chiefly stationed Welsh ponies in other districts?—I don't know, but I take it for granted that what you say is quite correct. I have not been in the district since you stationed the sires there.

1302. Are you aware that when we sent a Hackney and a Barb to the same district the people themselves preferred to have the use of the Hackney?—I would like to answer that question. I saw the Arabs that you bought, three of them, and I think two were the very worst class of Arabs. I saw the three Arabs in Daly's stables—one of them had come from the Queen's stable—and two were quite unsuited for breeding purposes. There was one gray, I must say, was a good one.

1303. What did you think of Lord Harrington's Barb?—The chestnut, that was a very good Barb.

1304. What do you say as to the bay Arab?—I don't know, but I must say as to two of the Arabs I saw they were a bad class of animals.

1305. One was the Queen's?—The Queen's particularly. I have seen the progeny of the animal, and they are just as bad as the sire.

1306. The CHAIRMAN.—Assuming the fact that it is correct that the farmers prefer Hackneys to the Barbs or Arabs, you would not be surprised because you say you don't think the Arabs were good of their class?—On that point I say it is impossible to apply a distinct answer to a problematical question.

1307. I think I can satisfy you with evidence on that point?—I may, my lord. We were anxious in the Royal Dublin Society, before the Congested Districts Board proceeded to improve the breed of horses in this district, to send suitable sires into those western districts—I mean the Dublin Society—and we purchased one small thoroughbred called "Watch Spring," 14.2 hands, and we sent him into one of the districts. We purchased him for a gentleman living in the district, on certain conditions. We paid £150 for the horse, and we sold the horse for the same money to him, undertaking to pay him £140 a year for three years for the service of the horse for seventy farmers' mares in that district, on the understanding that he was to charge only 10*s.* for farmers' mares, and £1 for gentlemen's mares.

1308. The CHAIRMAN.—Where was he sent to?—To Connemara, to Roundstone. The Congested Districts Board placed their stallion very shortly afterwards in the same district, and their service fee was only 5*s.*, and the result was that the farmers went to the 5*s.* horse, for they said "Here are two Government Boards sending down here the very best animals in the world, and we will go to the cheapest," and they went to the cheap horse and left our horse to a great extent idle. There you have the result of two Government departments managing horse breeding.

1309. Mr. WRENCH.—You don't suggest that the horse was sent specially to Clifden on that account?—No, I don't say so.

1310. Are you aware that it was by arrangement that no horse was sent to that district?—No.

1311. Do you know that the ordinary fee was 7*s.* 6*d.* for the ordinary country pony in Connemara?—Well, I don't know

1312. But you think that is the ordinary fee?—Yes, that is about it.

1313. In 1875, when you left, the class of stallion in use was very much deteriorated, and you knew that the farmers were breeding from their own animals and produced a very bad class?—Yes.

1314. You don't know what foreign blood brought in the larger animal?—No.

1315. You did not trace the exact origin of the Connemara pony beyond the time that Col. Martin introduced the Arab blood?—No.

1316. Do you know that they were traced behind that?—No.

1317. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—The history of the pony before the time to which you refer you know nothing about?—Yes.

1318. The produce was there in the year 1850?—Yes.

1319. You knew the district?—Yes.

1320. It is a mountainous district?—Yes.

1321. I suppose you know that it was exposure and the quality of the herbage that made the animals there degenerate from a larger breed?—I can't say that.

1322. Because you must know that in the last century there were a very great number of Arab stallions not only in Ireland, but in England?—Yes.

1323. And previous to Colonel Martin having drafted in that particular breed there, there was some of the breed in the place?—I have no doubt it was.

1324. You have mentioned the Welsh ponies. Do you know the breed of the Welsh ponies?—No; I don't know anything about them, except that I have seen some very nice ponies belonging to the Congested Districts Board.

1325. You are not aware that the Welsh breed of ponies, going back fifty years, was very largely an in-take from the Norfolk Hackney?—I daresay it is.

1326. That is a very well known fact?—Yes; and I suggested their use in many exposed districts where only a very hardy horse could live out the winter.

1327. Frequent reference has been made to Arab and Barb blood. What definition do you give to Barb?—I cannot define it.

1328. Are not both Eastern horses?—Yes; both are Eastern blood. The Barb has generally more substance than the Arab.

1329. Only imaginary, I think?—Yes.

1330. What they call Barbs?—Yes.

1331. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you remember the Welsh cob taking first prize at the Galway Show?—The chestnut.

1332. The bay?—Yes.

1333. And that is the class of animal you would think suitable for Connemara?—Yes; for some parts.

1334. For Ballyconneely and Carraroe?—Yes.

1335. The CHAIRMAN.—What became of "Watch Spring" that the Dublin Society sent down to this district?—He is there still. We have effected the object for which we localised him there. I saw some of his stock at the Hollymount Show, and they were extremely good. One, I recollect, got first prize.

1336. Have you reduced the fee?—No, we cannot now regulate the fee charged as the horse has been paid for and he belongs to the owner of the Ballynahinch property.

1337. Do you know what is charged now?—I don't know what is charged now.

1338. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you know the breeding of "Watch Spring"?—Got by "Sterling."

1339. Isn't it by "Springfield"?—Yes, you are right, by "Springfield."

1340. The CHAIRMAN.—Turn now to the northern district?—The northern district is the one perhaps I know less of than any of the other districts, and what I know of it strictly is that it is generally confined to the breeding of carriage horses and what I would call the general utility horse. There are very few thoroughbred stallions on our register standing in

the North of Ireland. I believe I am correct in saying that as a general rule the northern dealers and the northern horse owners are in the habit of buying in the southern district, at Cahirmee or Limerick or Hospital, the colts are brought up and trained in the North of Ireland, and then they are sold as hunters and high class carriage horses. A great number that are shown at the Dublin Show by breeders from the North of Ireland have been bought at Spancil Hill, Hospital and Cahirmee, purchased as three year olds and then brought back to the show five years old and sold as hunters. They don't breed that class of horse as a rule in the North of Ireland.

1341. In your opinion what class of stallion do you consider most suitable in the North of Ireland?—I should strongly recommend a thoroughbred horse specially selected as suitable for getting carriage horses.

1342. And the general utility horse?—And the general utility horse, either a thoroughbred horse or a half-bred horse, with the qualification I have referred to.

1343. Assuming that it would be possible to confine the blood to the North of Ireland would you have the same objection to Hackney blood to produce harness or generally utility horses?—I think the other is very much better.

1344. Mr. WRENCH.—The half-bred stallion?—Yes.

1345. The CHAIRMAN.—That is half-bred with the conditions you have mentioned?—Under the conditions I have mentioned.

1346. Then as regards Hackneys I gather generally you think a suitable thoroughbred or a half-bred selected under conditions you have mentioned is better than a Hackney to produce any kind of horse that is produced in Ireland?—Yes, that is my opinion.

1347. Objecting generally you would not consider it so objectionable in the North of Ireland as in portions of the west, south, midland, and east?—Yes.

1348. You also object, as I gather, to this strain of blood being introduced into one district of the country on the ground that the strain would spread throughout the country?—Yes, that is the danger I apprehend.

1349. Is that the principal danger you apprehend?—Yes, the principal danger.

1350. You say as the strain is not readily detected you could not prevent the farmers using it?—I don't see how it is possible to detect it no matter how good a judge a man may be.

1351. Taking the whole country generally you have a long experience, and do you see any deterioration in the class of horse produced so far as harness horses are concerned?—No. There is no deterioration I am glad to say, and I am sure there is a marked improvement in the class and quality of the horses bred in Ireland.

1352. There are more horses bred than there used to be?—There are more horses bred than there used to be, and there are more highly classed horses sold by dealers and go to England—I suppose two to one or three to one—more than there used to be.

1353. I think I gather from you that you anticipate that the demand for inferior classes of horses, for the general utility horse, will be less in future?—I think it will die out to a large extent, that is the demand for hacks or utility horses kept for ordinary use. It is dying out as it is. I know great numbers of people have sold their horses and ride their bicycles.

1354. More people keep bicycles now?—Yes.

1355. But the general demand for hunters and harness horses will maintain itself?—I think it is on the increase. Two men hunt now for one who hunted ten years ago, and consequently there is a larger demand for hunters, and I am glad to say as to high class horses from Ireland there is always a demand for them.

1356. Consequently you think, taking the industry as a whole, it is advisable that the attention of the producers should be directed to producing these high class harness horses and hunters?—I think so.

1357. Have you any further information you can give or any suggestion, taking the matters in the order in which you took yourself at the beginning?—Yes. I should like to suggest that I think the basis upon which the horse-breeding interest depends in Ireland is the registration of stallions. I think, whatever class of stallions are to be used in Ireland, they ought to be registered, and they ought to be registered by a board, a competent body, in whom the public would have confidence; and that, next to getting rid by legislation of bad horses, that is the only way by which you can minimise the danger of having bad stallions in the country. We have in the Dublin Society been trying to effect the registration of stallions, with the result that already a very large number of bad, useless horses have been sold and left the country. We found that the horses were earmarked by not having a place on our register, and the owners got rid of them, and in their place got better ones. I attach the greatest importance to, and I think any expense in moderation incurred in carrying out, a complete and satisfactory registration of stallions would be well spent. I think the scheme of the Dublin Society of 1894 in requiring the country committees to select mares was a good one. I would be in favour of giving nominations to mares, and giving substantial prizes to young mares put to stud. I think if you register the stallions that you will secure a sufficient number of sound, good horses in the country, and that if you could induce men to put young mares of a good class, two or three years old, to the stallion, and make it worth their while to do it by offering them substantial prizes, you will in that way secure a very marked improvement in the breed of horses in Ireland. Of course the difficulty in the scheme, if it is to have any sensible effect, is that it will cost money; it can't be done otherwise.

1358. Are we to gather from you that you prefer the system in operation in the Dublin Society up to 1894 to the present?—Yes. I would like to see it and the 1896 scheme combined. I would like to see nominations combined with prizes to young mares put to stud purposes.

1359. Have you anything more that you would like to put before the Commission?—No, I don't think so at present.

1360. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—You think soundness in the stallion is a matter of vital importance?—I do.

1361. Have you any knowledge of the practice of foreign countries in this matter?—No. Nothing beyond what I have read, I have no personal knowledge.

1362. Mr. WRENCH.—With regard to the registration of stallions you would only register thoroughbreds and half-breds such as you have described?—Yes.

1363. That is all you recommend?—Yes.

1364. That is that thoroughbreds and half-breds should be the only registered stallions?—Yes.

1365. What would you do with stallions outside that class? Would you require a licence of soundness, or would you leave matters as at present?—You would require legislation for that.

1366. Would you recommend any legislation?—No. I would not approve of stallions being required to have a licence for soundness, I would have nothing to do with them if they were unsound, I would rather get rid of them altogether, and limit the stallions to the class I have referred to.

1367. You would limit the public to thoroughbreds and half-breds under carefully considered conditions?—Yes.

1368. Do you know anything about the introduction of the American horse into Ireland?—No. You mean the horses imported into Ireland. I don't know much of them.

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1369. They have not come under your observation. Do you think it is a good thing for the country or a bad?—I think it is a very bad thing. I have seen a Californian horse at the Horse Show, and it was very good.

1370. I referred to the American horses brought in here and offered for sale. Are they very bad indeed?—Yes.

1371. And you think they will do great harm?—I do.

1372. Do you suggest in any way the branding of such horses?—I think it would be very good.

1373. You think there should be branding of the American horses that are brought in here?—Yes, I would do anything that would preserve our Irish blood, and maintain it in every way.

1374. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Were you not suspicious that some of the animals exhibited at the last Dublin Show were imported from America?—We were suspicious.

1375. And your remarks all point to the importance of keeping the Irish hunter breed pure?—I think it is a great advantage.

1376. And to insure this purity are you in favour of the registration of mares if it can be carried out?—If it can be carried out I would be very glad, but it is a tremendous undertaking.

1377. Mr. WRENCH.—It would be too much for the committee of the Royal Dublin Society?—It is a tremendous undertaking.

1378. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Failing that it is not undertaken by the Royal Dublin Society, do you think if the Dublin Society could give in the class for mares more tempting prizes for reliable pedigrees that could be carried out?—I am not quite prepared to say whether that would be practicable or desirable or not, but it could be done of course.

1379. I suppose you notice in the catalogue the numerous cases in the classes for two or three year olds where you would imagine the pedigree should be known, that in many, a very large number of cases, the personality of the breeder is unknown and the pedigrees are in?—I don't think there are any two year olds at our show.

1380. Well, in the three and four year olds?—Yes, the reason of that is that the owner of the horse was not quite certain of the breeding. He may have purchased the horse, and he may have been given the breeding as so-and-so, but not being quite certain of it, unless he had documentary proof, he did not put it in. Some people are very slow about giving a pedigree unless they are in a position to prove it.

1381. The breeders are unknown, but the pedigree is known?—Yes. Very often a two year old horse is sold in a fair, and quite correctly the dealer is told that he is by "Victor," out of a dam by "Warren Hastings," and the horse then passes through two or three hands, and it comes to the show at last, and the man who bought the horse last has lost all trace of the breeder, and he is, therefore, unable to give the breeder's name though the pedigree is carefully handed down.

1382. If the system of insisting on the breeder's name being given is carried out in future it will make purchasers more careful?—I quite agree with you that it is desirable.

1383. I am very glad you think so, because it has always appeared to me such an omission in reading the catalogues of your show?—I attach the greatest value myself to breeding, and I think anybody buying a horse would wish to be perfectly satisfied about it.

Lord ASHTOWN.—Registering the mares would do that.

Captain C. Fetherstonhaugh.

Captain C. FETHERSTONHAUGH examined.

1384. The CHAIRMAN.—You are a member of the Irish Horse Breeding Association?—Yes, my lord.

1385. And you take a general interest in the subject of horse-breeding?—Yes; I may say I take a very deep interest in horse-breeding in Ireland generally.

1386. Have you had any personal experience in horse-breeding?—Well, I may say I have had a good deal of experience; I have been breeding horses ever since I was twenty, and I have also been an owner of a stallion for a considerable number of years; had several stallions, and I have acted as judge at shows, and in various ways I have had a good deal to say to horse-breeding.

1387. In what districts of the country has your experience been gained?—I can only speak for the midland counties; I live in Westmeath, and can only speak for that part of Ireland. I have not had any varied experience in other parts of Ireland, except I have acted as judge at shows in other parts of Ireland, and seen the class of horses bred there.

1388. Speaking for your own district, which you know best, do you think that the quality of the horses has deteriorated at all?—Well, no; I am certain the contrary has taken place. I think that undoubtedly there are a great number of inferior animals, perhaps a greater number than ever there were in the country, but I attribute that chiefly to the greater number of horses that have been lately bred in the country, and, of course, the more horses that are bred the more misfits must be bred. For the last few years horse-breeding has paid very well, up to the last two or three years it has paid tremendously well; but latterly it has not, and consequently the fairs are now very full of horses of an unsaleable and unsound description, for which there is no market.

1389. You are speaking of breeding what class of horses?—I am speaking of breeding from half-bred mares with thoroughbred horses, and the same class of mare crossed with the ordinary stallion of the country, which is of a nondescript description.

1390. That would be horses for hunting?—Every farmer's object in my country when he breeds a horse is to breed him for a hunter, for if he is not suitable for a hunter he goes as a trooper or to a lower grade.

1391. Would the same remark apply to the whole country, so far as you know it; I mean that there has been no general deterioration?—I am confident there has not been; that a greater number of good horses are bred in the country than ever there were, and there is a greater demand for them, and horses are taken at an earlier age than ever they were before.

1392. There are more horses bred altogether?—Yes; I consider there are a great many more horses bred in the country, and more good ones. Yes; I think there are certainly more good horses bred; at the same time, there are a great number of indifferent animals bred in the country.

1393. Well, can you tell the Commission on what facts you base that opinion?—I consider there must be more horses bred in the country, because I see the fairs are full of an unsaleable class of horse; there are enormous numbers of them which they take from fair to fair, and especially this autumn horses would be sold for anything that would be offered for them, but they are of an indifferent description; the best class of horses never comes into the fairs at all, at least great numbers of them are bought privately.

1394. These horses you speak of as now unsaleable, do you mean they were formerly saleable?—Yes, I consider that they were three or four years ago; they were then sold and were shipped to England, but there is not a demand for those horses now.

1395. Do you account for that in any way?—Yes, a great many people have given up keeping horses and taken to bicycles; the middle-class people keep less horses than they used to—they keep bicycles, and don't keep small horses for their own pleasure that they used to keep.

1396. May I take it that you think the demand for superior animals is as great as ever it was?—I think it is greater.

1397. And the supply?—And the supply is greater than ever it was, but the supply is not equal to the demand by any means.

1398. But the demand for the inferior animals is less?—Is absolutely nil.

1399. Well, you think the supply is likely to accommodate itself to that, that is to say, that the production of the inferior animal will naturally fall off?—I think it is bound to, because the breeding of that class of horses is not paying the farmer, and I think he will gradually drop it, that is the small farmer.

1400. Did you hear Mr. Roberts' evidence?—I did.

1401. Do you generally agree with him as to the undesirability of the small class of farmers breeding?—I do; I think many farmers breed from mares which are bound to be a loss to themselves and to the country at large, I don't think they are capable of breeding an animal that will ever pay for feeding; but, I think, they are beginning to realize this—they are not breeding them in such numbers as they did.

1402. They can breed a class of animals which was saleable some years ago, but which is not saleable now?—I think there are a great number of very good mares in the country, excellent mares, and I gather this principally from mares that I see exhibited at shows about me; at the same time, there are a great number of a bad class of mares that are principally in the possession of small farmers—the best class of mares are usually owned by the better class of farmers, who feed their stock better.

1403. And as to the stallions?—There are a great number of very good thoroughbred stallions standing in the country, but they are standing at fees which are more or less prohibitive for the smaller farmers of the country, and outside them there are an enormous number of what are called draught stallions, which have been extensively used by the farmers lately.

1404. What do you mean by that?—Horses with a good admixture of carthorse blood.

1405. You are speaking of the midland counties now?—I am speaking of the midland counties principally.

1406. What do you mean by carthorse blood?—I mean a cross of Shire, or Cleveland, or Clydesdale.

1407. Have they become more common in your district than formerly?—I think they have; I think there are a great number of them.

1408. They belong, of course, to private owners?—Oh, yes.

1409. Would they be introduced if there was not a demand for them?—Oh, there undoubtedly is a demand for them for the use of the more weedy description of mares.

1410. What kind of fees do they charge?—I think from 10*s.* to £1, and, I suppose, in some cases less.

1411. And what are the general fees charged for thoroughbred stallions in your district?—The average fee would be £3, £3 3*s.*, from that to 5 guineas.

1412. Could you form any opinion as to whether the farmer prefers the carthorse stallion to the thoroughbred stallion on account of the lower fee, or because he thinks it makes a more valuable animal?—I think the farmers in the country breed from the carthorse, chiefly because they get him cheaper, and also because he gets more size in the progeny; but they are chiefly men who breed to sell the produce at one and a-half years old, and for that purpose they want size.

1413. What are they sold at do you know, I mean for what purpose?—They are bought by English dealers and shipped over, I have been told that they are bought chiefly for putting in tradesmen's carts in provincial towns in England; they put them to harness at a very early age, and if they turn out good they turn a penny on them and replace them with another one.

1414. What kind of a horse do they use for agricultural purposes about you?—They use a light description of horse, a heavy agricultural horse is not needed, we have very little tillage in the country, and a heavy horse is not suited at all, the light description of horse is able to bring a marvellous weight of hay and straw, enormous loads compared with the size of the animal.

1415 Then in your opinion is the produce of the Shire horse generally sold out of the country or kept in the country?—I think they are chiefly sold at an early age.

1416. And generally do you think the class of stallion in your country is the best it can be for the purpose?—I think this class of half-bred stallion that I mentioned is a very bad class of stallion, and I don't think it pays the farmers to breed from them, but the thoroughbred stallions I consider are very good, but there are not enough of them and the fees are too high.

1417. By the class of stallion you speak of do you mean the draught stallion?—I mean the draught stallion, the nondescript animal with a large admixture of cartblood.

1418. Have you any opinion as to how an improvement can be made in respect of the stallions?—I am of opinion that it would be a great advantage to the country if more thoroughbred stallions were put at the disposal of the farmers at a small fee. I also think that a class of stallion is required in the country other than a thoroughbred horse, for the use of small farmers whose mares are of a weedy description, I think a half-bred horse, that is to say a horse with a good admixture of thoroughbred blood and bred from what is called a country mare, an old Irish country mare, would be the best stamp for use in the country.

1419. Have you any suggestion to make as to how that could be brought about?—Well, I think that of course it can only be brought about by state aid; if a demand arose for this class of horse they would be bred.

1420. You mean it would not pay a private person as a commercial speculation to introduce that kind of horse?—I don't think it would, because they would not be of a recognised breed, and they would not be registered, which, I think, is a very necessary thing. I think all stallions serving should be registered and certified sound, and of proper formation.

1421. Have you had any practical experience of the working of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes, I have; I have acted as chairman of my county committee.

1422. And what do you think of the scheme?—I think it has done an incalculable lot of good to the country, especially in some counties.

1423. Especially in what counties?—I should say especially in the counties Meath, Kildare, and Mayo. I think the horses have improved enormously at the shows there. I have acted as judge at Hollymount for the past five years or more, and every year I see a marked improvement, and the younger horses better, which shows they are steadily improving.

1424. Can you explain why the scheme has had a better effect in these counties than in others?—In my own county I know the reason it has not been a success is that there are not a sufficient number of thoroughbred registered stallions at the disposal of the farmers, and what there are are standing at too high a fee.

1425. Well, there have been various schemes, have there not, of the Royal Dublin Society from time to time, have you any preference for one over the other?—Yes, stallions were originally subsidised, and for the last two years the money has been given in premiums to mares in foal to those registered stallions.

1426. Which of these schemes do you prefer?—I think if the two schemes were worked in conjunction it would be the best.

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1427. That would be to——?—That would be to give the mares nominations to registered stallions, so that the owner of the mare could select his own stallion. Formerly there was only one registered stallion in the country, that is to say there was one subsidised stallion and he was not sufficient for the area that had to be covered. I would then suggest that no money should be given in prizes to old mares, but substantial bonuses or premiums should be given to young mares from two to five years old, and there would require to be a substantial sum to encourage the owner of the mare to keep her for the purpose of breeding instead of turning her into cash.

1428. Do you think they do sell their mares largely abroad?—I am quite certain they do. Any mare that is a saleable animal is sold, and mares, except from accident or blemish, are rarely put aside to breed young mares.

1429. You think generally there is a tendency to sell the best mares and breed from inferior ones?—Anything that is saleable is cashed.

1430. And you would suggest giving a prize of a sufficient amount to counteract the inclination to sell?—Yes, that would encourage the farmer to keep his young mare to breed from.

1431. I think, you said, that the demand for hunters and high class carriage horses is increasing?—Yes, I certainly consider it is, every horse of any value at all in my part of the world is immediately bought up when offered for sale.

1432. Do you think the supply is increasing in proportion to the increased demand?—Well, I don't think it is, I think the demand always exceeds the supply, and the consequence of that is the high price at which horses are selling in Ireland.

1433. Then to a certain extent you think there is a scarcity in Ireland for hunters?—I think there is undoubtedly, though a great number are bred.

1434. And besides what you have already said can you suggest any means whereby the production could or should be encouraged?—I don't think, except by local shows and prizes being given to encourage farmers to put aside their good mares to breed from, I don't see what could be done in addition to the registration of stallions, which I look upon as very important.

1435. I think you said that the quality of horses at fairs is not as good as it used to be?—No, well I attribute that to many horses of the best class not getting into the fairs at all, they are bought up before ever they get in, and in addition to that the local shows have also taken the cream of the horses, which used formerly to be sold in fairs, and now meet a ready market at the shows.

1436. Then, in your opinion, the fairs cannot be taken as a fair criterion of the quality or the quantity?—No, I don't think so.

1437. What class of horses have you bred yourself?—I have always aimed at breeding a high class hunter or steeplechase horse. I don't think myself that it pays to breed anything else.

1438. And what kind of a sire?—A thoroughbred sire.

1439. I think you said that in your district the farmers had bred hunters from Shire horses?—Oh, I don't say that they breed hunters, my lord. They have bred animals which they have sold to go to England at an early age, at one and a half years of age, they go by the name of "clibs" in the country, they are sold at fairs.

1440. You don't know what becomes of them?—I think they are shipped to England, I don't know for what, unless they eventually find their way as tram horses.

1441. Then you have no experience yourself of hunters bred by a cross with Shire blood?—No, I have not, indeed, I don't consider that a hunter with cart blood in him would be any use in this country.

1442. Why do you think not?—Because I think that it takes an exceptional horse to carry a man to hounds in this country, I think that a horse must have great stamina and power of endurance, and I don't think any soft blood in him would conduce to that.

1443. Would that same remark apply to England?—Well, I presume it would, quite so.

1444. As far as hunters are concerned, I gather you would not approve of any strain of cart-horse blood?—No, I would be entirely against it.

1445. Or Hackney blood?—I should be entirely against any soft blood, and I consider Hackney blood would come under that denomination.

1446. How about horses bred for harness purposes?—My experience of harness horses is that horses that are bred for hunters are equally good harness horses, and there is an equal demand for them, and if they have a certain amount of action that there is just as ready a sale for them in fairs for harness purposes as for hunters, and I see them sold at local fairs, Mullingar, and other fairs with which I am acquainted, and they make just as much money for one purpose as for another.

1447. Action, I suppose, is an important factor in a harness horse. Action and colour influences them a great deal?—If they are good colour and have a bit of action they are almost invariably bought for harness horses.

1448. Don't you think the Hackney would be useful in giving action?—Well, I don't think that sort of Hackney action—I don't consider it is true action, it is extravagant and may be very good for show purposes or for towns, but I don't think it is for general purposes. I think the action is extravagant and is bound to tire.

1449. Putting aside your own personal opinion on the matter and looking at the matter commercially, do you think the introduction of Hackney blood would produce a saleable horse?—I don't think it would, because if the buyer got wind of its having Hackney blood in it I think he would in all probability fight shy.

1450. Have you any experience about army remounts?—I have served in a cavalry regiment for ten years and I have always taken a great interest in remounts, and I have on various occasions sold fillies bred by myself for the purpose.

1451. They were by thoroughbred horses?—Invariably, I never bred from anything else.

1452. Do you hold the same opinion as regards Hackney and cart-horse blood in reference to army remounts?—I do, most strongly; I am of opinion from any experience I may have that a trooper that had not got thoroughbred blood on one side would be of little value, would not have sufficient endurance.

1453. Have you any opinion at all as to the advisability or practibility of the remounts being bought direct from the breeder instead of through a dealer?—It is of course a very good thing if it could be managed, but at the same time I think it is a very difficult thing to do and would require a much larger organisation than is put at the disposal of the Army Remount Department in Ireland. It is the province of the dealers and has been for many years, for innumerable years, to buy the horses for the purpose, and I think that there would be a great difficulty in any private individual or body buying them outside of the dealers.

1454. Some suggestions have been made to the Commission that it might be a good thing if the cast troopers were in some way distributed throughout the country, do you think that would be a good thing from your experience of the country and of the army?—I don't think it would; I think the cast trooper as a rule is an old and hard fed animal that I think would be unlikely to breed well, of course they have bred well in some instances, but I don't think as a rule they would breed well. They have been fed many years on hard feeding without a mouthful of grass, and it would be some years before they threw an animal of any class.

1455. They would not be cast, I suppose, while they had many years left?—No; and it would require two or three years before they would breed very likely.

1456. You heard Mr. Roberts' evidence?—I did, my lord.

1457. Do you generally agree with what he has said, or have you any remarks to make?—I agree entirely with Mr. Roberts' evidence in every point.

1458. Lord ASHTOWN.—Don't you think small farmers in your district—I mean very small—sometimes breed a horse with a double object, to work the land and to deal in?—I think as a rule that class of man owns a mare which he keeps for that purpose and always likes to cash the produce.

1459. At one and a-half years old?—Yes.

1460. And might not that be the reason why they use so much the draught sire?—I agree with you, I think that is the reason why they do in so many instances, but at the same time I think if a good class of thoroughbred sire or half-bred sire registered as has been described here was at their disposal, I think they would much prefer him to the coarse horse they breed from at present.

1461. Do you think they would do their work on the land as well?—I do, and the chances are that the produce would be much sounder.

1462. How would you be disposed to have a registry of mares kept as well as of sires?—I think it would be a great advantage to the country if it could be worked, but I think it would be a very complex business and would entail an enormous amount of expense verifying the pedigrees, and it would take a long time before it was thoroughly established; I think if it was once established it would then go ahead.

1463. And put money into the pockets of the breeders?—It would, and would enhance the value of Irish horses in the eyes of foreigners.

1464. You admit that the Hackney is good for town work, do you?—I think that he is a good animal to show off up and down.

1465. He gets money?—There are always a class of men who will give money for him.

1466. The question is which is the most valuable harness horse—the town harness or the country harness horse?—I consider the Irish bred colt by the thoroughbred horse is far and away the best animal provided he has action.

1467. What proportion would you get of those?—I think if thoroughbred stallions were purchased and put through the country and bought with action, I think many thoroughbred stallions in the country have not sufficient action, but there is certainly a great want of good thoroughbred stallions in the country with size and action, and I am certain they could be bought in England.

1468. Another thing you say, you find the farmers don't keep their young mares if they can get a good price for them, that means practically that if the filly is not worse than the mare they breed from they sell it?—They rarely keep the filly unless the mare is worn out.

1469. Unless they thought the filly would sell for less than the mare?—Unless the filly was injured or blemished or unsound.

1470. Sir T. ESMONDE.—You think it would be a public advantage if there were more stallions throughout the country?—I think it would be of the greatest advantage, what is really wanted is to oust the mongrel and bad stallion that is going through the country now, and I think the only way to do that is for State aid to be applied to placing sound stallions through the country which would eventually oust these unsound and hairy-heeled brutes that are now covering mares throughout the country.

1470A. And of course you would think it advisable that these stallions should be supplied to the farmers at a low fee?—At the fees they are now giving for the mongrel stallions, that is the only way to get rid of the mongrel animals that are in the country now.

1471. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you stated that there is a scarcity of hunters in Ireland, and by scarcity of hunters in Ireland do you mean that there are fewer good horses now bred than formerly or do you merely mean that the demand for them is greater?—I merely mean that the demand is greater.

1472. Now in reference to your answers to Lord Ashtown is not the demand for Clydesdales and Shires in consequence of the cry out among farmers for bone?—Undoubtedly, what they say is they want more size.

1473. If a good half bred stallion of more or less reliable old Irish blood were standing close by a Clydesdale or Shire stallion and they were standing at equal fees, in your opinion to which stallion would the farmer send his mare to get bone?—I think the cart stallion would be left severely alone.

1474. Mr. CAREW.—You would have thoroughbred and half-bred?—I would have thoroughbred blood half to three parts in the stallion.

1475. That is thoroughbred for blood and half-bred for bone and substance?—Yes, and more especially for the use of the smaller farmers who would want to work their mares on farms.

1476. That is the custom in the beginning?—They work them as two and three year olds and sell them in fairs, harrowed and ploughed.

1477. Mr. WRENCH.—You said you would have all the stallions registered, by that I suppose you mean thoroughbred or approved half-breds?—That is the only ones I would admit to register.

1478. In addition to the register would you think it wise that there should be a licence, that all stallion owners should be obliged to take out a licence that their stallions are sound?—I think the register would be sufficient in the end.

1479. You think so many stallions would be registered under the scheme that there would not be a large balance remaining throughout the country breeding unsound animals?—I don't think there would be, especially if there were sound stallions stationed throughout the country that would answer the description of the horse we want to put in the country.

1480. You think all the steps that would be necessary with regard to stallions would be to supply thoroughbred and half-bred stallions?—That is my view.

1481. And that they would fulfil all the requirements of the country?—I think so.

1482. Then you said you consider Hackney blood soft, do you know that in any way from your own observation?—I cannot say that I have had any experience beyond what I have actually seen, I have never owned a Hackney stallion, but I am only echoing the sentiments of nine-tenths of the breeders and buyers throughout Ireland that I have come in contact with, they one and all affirm that the introduction of Hackney blood would mean ruin to the horsebreeding industry, at any rate of our part of the country.

1483. Did you merely take that opinion from what you heard?—I merely took that opinion from what I have heard.

1484. But you think supposing there was any way discovered of breeding harness horses without introducing soft blood that that would pay as well as breeding hunters, I think you said that the horses bred for harness make just as much money in the fairs as hunters?—They do, undoubtedly.

1485. You think there is as good a demand for harness horses with action?—Just as great a demand.

1486. That it would be as paying an industry?—Not as paying.

1487. And do you think that harness horses can be sold at an earlier age than hunters?—No, I think the harness horse can be sold at three off, and the horse is sold to make a hunter at the same age.

1488. Lord ASHTOWN.—Untrained?—Untrained putting them both as long-tails.

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Captain C. Fetherston-haugh.

1489. Mr. WRENCH.—You think you can sell a four-year old for a hunter to the same advantage as you can sell a harness horse at four years old?—I see them going at just the same price.

1490. You said you thought it was of great importance that thoroughbred stallions stationed through the country should have good action?—I do think it is very important.

1491. Do you think the thoroughbred horse has at all the same power of perpetuating action as the Hackney stallion has?—Well, I cannot say that because I have never had any experience in breeding from a Hackney.

1492. Col. ST. QUINTON.—Do you consider that the Hackney action is a useful action?—No, distinctly not; and I also think it is a class of horse that is entirely unsuited to the requirements of this country.

1493. Sir W. GILBEY.—The best horses bred in Ireland do they come to the Dublin Show?—I think they do, without exception.

1494. You stated that a thoroughbred stallion and one of the old breed of Irish mares would be suitable to breed the half-bred sire?—I think that is the way the animal that is required must be bred.

1495. But would you not need any qualification with that mare, because you have said the best mares have left the country; are there still mares good enough?—There are undoubtedly plenty of good mares still left, plenty of them; it is the young mares that go.

1496. Would you need no qualification for these mares, that they should have either won races or steeplechases, or know something about the breeding?—I think that would have to be left to the discretion, of the body who were appointed to select these mares for the purpose.

1497. You keep thoroughbred stallions?—I do.

1498. Do you find any difficulty in getting stallions; is it knee-action you mean when you speak of action?—I mean a little knee-action, but principally shoulder action.

1499. What you would term a daisy-cutter, or would he lift his feet?—No, he must have knee-action in conjunction with shoulder action.

1500. Have you found great difficulty in getting horses of that description thoroughbred?—Well, I think there is a certain amount of difficulty: but I think at the same time there are plenty of them to be had if they are looked for.

1501. You have attended sales in London, I suppose, of thoroughbred stock?—I have, at Newmarket.

1502. And York and other places?—Newmarket, and Doncaster, I have on various occasions.

1503. Have you ever been able to see there the animal you describe that would be good enough to breed from, with a knee action that would descend to the progeny?—Oh, I have seen plenty of them.

1504. In the locality in which you reside there is a demand only for thoroughbreds, you say?—The best class of mares are sent to thoroughbred horses entirely.

1505. Do you find no difficulty in filling the service of thoroughbreds that you have there, your own for instance?—I think that latterly the smaller farmers have rather weaned off the thoroughbred horse, I think that they want an animal with more substance and bone than the thoroughbred.

1506. But has your horse, the one you keep, the knee action you describe?—He has not as much as I could wish but he is a nice actioned horse.

1507. In answering Mr. Wrench you said you know nothing of the back breeding of the Hackney?—No, I don't know anything about the Hackney.

1508. You don't know that he came originally from the same source as the thoroughbred?—I understand a great many of them have two or three crosses.

1509. One and all date back to the one horse just as the thoroughbred dates back to 2 or 3, you are not aware of that?—No, I have no knowledge of Hackney breeding.

1510. You have not used the Hackneys for driving?—No.

1511. What do mean by show action?—I mean extravagant action.

1512. Horses that can get away with that action go up to sixteen or eighteen miles an hour, do you call that show action?—I cannot say they do the distance, at any rate they have tremendous action for a a short journey, but I think it is action that a horse could not possibly stay at.

1513. But you have no experience of it?—No; I cannot say I have.

1514. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you the same thoroughbred horse I have seen before?—I have him still.

1515. Do you seriously think he has sufficient action to get harness horses?—I said in my evidence that he had not got as much knee action as I could wish.

1516. Merely as a harness horse sire?—I look upon him as a hunter sire, I would prefer him if he had more action.

1517. The CHAIRMAN.—I take it that what you know about Hackneys is by repute, you have had no practical experience?—No, there are none in use in my part of Ireland at all.

1518. I suppose you have seen them at shows?—I have frequently.

1519. And I gather from you that if it could be managed you think that the registration of mares would be a good thing?—I think it would be a very good thing, I think it would enhance the value of Irish horses.

1520. You think the registration of stallions would be sufficient and that the licensing of stallions is not necessary?—I think it would have to be done by Act of Parliament.

1521. There is great difference, registration is voluntary and licensing is compulsory?—I think if sufficient horses are put at the disposal of the farmers of Ireland at a small fee the illegitimate stallions would be soon crowded out.

1522. That is what I wanted to ascertain from you because for the State to insist upon licensing stallions might be very wise, but it would be rather an arbitrary act?—It is an innovation, I would not like to counsel that at once, the other is rather the easiest way of doing it and would create less friction.

1523. And would produce the desirable result?—I think it would in time.

1524. Mr. WRENCH.—Is it not a fact that the mares in Westmeath are about the best mares in any county in Ireland?—I think without saying that they are the best, I think they are as good as any in any part of the country.

1525. Of a very high standard?—Of a very high standard.

1526. And you have a lot of men there who are intelligent enough to send their mares to the best stallions?—Undoubtedly, but I consider that class of men don't require to be legislated for.

1527. It has not therefore been impressed upon you quite as much as on other people how bad the mares in the country can be?—No; I think of course in every county there are a certain number of bad mares. I don't think we have a preponderance of bad mares in Westmeath.

1528. You have a preponderance of good mares?—I think we have, which would also apply to Meath and Kildare; the poorer the district the poorer the class of mare.

1529. Sir W. GILBEY.—With regard to the half-bred sire, you would have him registered the same as the thoroughbred?—Undoubtedly; I would allow no horse to serve unless he was registered, if possible.

1530. And that would be some security as to his having been bred under a suitable mare such as you describe?—Undoubtedly, and mares would be given nominations to these registered stallions; that is the system I would work on.

1531. Lord ASHTOWN.—And it would be necessary to register most of the mares to have their progeny registered as well?—Certainly, I am all for registration.

1532. I may be quite wrong, but I think about two years ago I saw your name down in the prize list at Mullingar for a colt by a thoroughbred out of a Cleveland?—You are quite right, but the horse's name was "Cleveland," he was a thoroughbred horse named "Cleveland."

1533. Mr. WRENCH.—There was a Cleveland Bay in Westmeath, was there not?—There was, some years ago, at Castlepollard, not recently; I have often heard that his stock were of a saleable description, at any rate they were good-looking. I cannot say whether they had stamina, I have never seen them.

1534. It was a long time ago?—About thirty years ago.

1535. Mr. CAREW.—You have a thoroughbred sire called "Delight"?—We have, who has got more good stock than any other horse in the country.

1536. The CHAIRMAN.—Are you a member of the Royal Dublin Society?—I am.

1537. Are you on the Council?—No, I am not; I am on the Horse-breeding Committee, an additional member of it.

1538. Sir W. GILBEY.—I notice in the Dublin catalogue I have before me, and also observed it at the show, there was a three-year-old gelding shown, a thoroughbred gelding—you give prizes for thoroughbred yearlings, but no prize for two-year-olds and three-year-olds—and I ascertained from the gentlemen that this was a clean bred horse, a gelding, and I said: "What a pity to have castrated that horse." He said: "There are no prizes given for two or three year olds, otherwise I would have kept him; he won a prize as a yearling"?—That is a fact, but if the present system is encouraged that horse would not have been castrated, he would have been kept for a half-bred stallion.

1539. He was thoroughbred, it struck me as a loss to the country he was sold at a large price to go abroad?—Nearly all thoroughbred horses are gelded in this country; they are bred principally for the purpose of making steeplechase horses, and they are nearly all cut as yearlings.

1540. Mr. CAREW.—Just to make him quiet for training?—There is a prejudice against stallions for steeplechasing.

1541. Mr. WRENCH.—As a matter of fact there are very few half-bred horses now kept as stallions?—Very few, very rarely. In former days people used to ride stallions as hunters, but now it is an exception.

1542. If the present race of half-bred horses die out, there are really not young horses in the country to replace them?—Not half-bred horses; I only know of one half-bred stallion hunter in Meath now, and he is the property of the Master of the Meath Hounds.

1543. CHAIRMAN.—How do you account for that change?—By fashion; it has become unfashionable to ride a stallion.

1544. Mr. WRENCH.—But if these horses were registered, and a register adopted for half-bred horses, don't you think it might then become more fashionable?—Undoubtedly.

1545. Lord ASHTOWN.—And also do good?—We anticipate it would.

1546. Lord RATHDONNEL.—Have you ever heard it stated as a fact that a stallion ridden to hounds, or raced, if he is over-pressed, is never quite so kind a horse again?—I have, and I believe it is an undisputed fact.

1547. Has not that something to say to the castrating of some of these horses in the case of hunters?—I think it has; and also that a half-bred stallion is not a saleable animal; people would not have him in their stables, as a rule they are troublesome horses; and in any case they require an enormous amount of work and exercise to keep them fit, more than their legs will stand.

1548. Mr. CAREW.—They require to be isolated in boxes?—They require to be isolated as well.

Captain J. F. TUTHILL examined.

1549. CHAIRMAN.—You are, I believe, secretary to the Irish Horse Breeding Association?—I am, my lord.

1550. Are you a member of the Royal Dublin Society?—I am not, my lord.

1551. Do you do any work for them in any way?—I do; I act for them as inspector under their horse-breeding scheme for the registration of sires throughout Ireland.

1552. Sole inspector?—I believe I am the only one.

1553. And on their behalf you would attend shows?—I do; I attend shows throughout Ireland, and report to the Dublin Society accordingly.

1554. Can you give the Commission any information as to the objects and so on of the Horse-breeding Association?—Yes, my lord. It was formed on the 13th of August of this year, and was the outcome of a deputation that waited on His Excellency on the 18th of May. That deputation was the outcome of a petition against Hackneys being imported into this country by State aid. This is a copy of the letter that was issued asking opinions upon it, and this is a copy of the petition:—

"DEAR SIR,—The enclosed will show you my object in writing. I have been requested to ask you, among other good authorities, on the subject of the importation of Hackney stallions into Ireland. You will oblige us very much if you will write a letter stating your experience and opinion with regard to these animals, and what effect on the breeding of carriage horses their introduction into English counties has produced. Will you kindly allow me to make use of your letter when the deputation waits on His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant a fortnight hence?"

This is a copy of the petition.

1555. To whom did you send these letters asking for opinions?—To the judges that chiefly come over to the shows in Dublin, and to the leading dealers throughout England.

1556. You sent them to the leading dealers in England. Did you not send them to people in Ireland at all?—I did not; personally this letter is not a letter of my own; perhaps I should say it is a letter of Mr. A. J. M'Neile, of Kilcock, County Meath.

1557. But written on behalf of your Society?—It was prior to the formation of the Society; that letter was dated 1st of May.

1558. That formed the basis on which you petitioned?—Yes, my lord.

1559. Perhaps you would read us the petition?

"Hackney Stallions.—We, the undersigned, are strongly of opinion that the introduction of Hackney stallions into Ireland will prove a serious injury to the breed of Irish horses, and that it will be impossible to confine the produce of these horses to the congested districts: we, therefore, humbly petition His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to use his influence against public funds being applied to encourage Hackney stallions."

That was very largely signed, indeed, and laid before His Excellency on the 18th of May here at the Castle.

1560. And that petition was the cause of the foundation of this Society?—Yes, my lord.

1561. We shall be very glad to hear any information as to the objects of the Society, and what steps were taken to carry out these objects?—The Society having been formed on the 13th August, 1896, I beg to submit a copy of its members up to the present date (produced); it embraces some 220 members.

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1562. Is that material to our inquiry?—These names are drawn from every part of Ireland—representative people—thoroughly conversant upon the subject of horse breeding.

1563. What we chiefly want to know is, what the object of the Society is, and what means you take to carry out that object?—Perhaps I ought to read the letter that was sent in answer to one we received from your Secretary upon the subject.

1564. Give us the information any way you like; I only want to know what were the objects of the Horse-breeding Association?—Then here is the letter, my lord:—

"11, South Frederick-street,
"Dublin, 26th Sept., 1896.

"SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 11th inst., requesting information as to the scope and work of the Irish Horse-breeding Association, and an expression of its views on several matters connected with that subject, I am directed to state that at present the primary object of the Association is to collect such information and evidence in regard to horse-breeding in the different parts of the country as they deem it important to submit for the consideration of the Commission. The Association includes among its members, a list of which is annexed, a large number of gentlemen who take a deep interest in maintaining and improving the high character of Irish horses, not only as hunters, but for all other useful purposes. They felt that it was only through such an organization as they have formed that the information and evidence which they deem it desirable to submit for the consideration of the Commission could be prepared in a satisfactory form, and they trust the action which they have taken may be useful to the Commission in connection with the arduous enquiry they have undertaken. The Association does not contemplate taking any steps for the registration of stallions. That most important duty, so far as it relates to thoroughbred horses, has been carried out for the past two years by the Royal Dublin Society in connection with their horse-breeding scheme, and has been attended with most satisfactory results, which will, no doubt, be fully explained to the Commission by the officers of that Society; it is, however, right here to observe that the Horse-breeding Association attach the greatest importance to the registration of sound and suitable stallions, and are of opinion that that duty should be entrusted to the Royal Dublin Society, and sufficient means placed at their disposal to carry it out in an efficient manner, and that the register should include every class of stallion which it is considered by competent and independent judges desirable to encourage in every district of the country. The Association is in favour of giving premiums to registered stallions under such conditions as will secure suitable sires being available for the service of mares of farmers of limited means at a moderate or nominal fee. If such an arrangement could be carried out in conjunction with the giving of substantial prizes in each county for young mares used for stud purposes, and young stock got by registered stallions, on the system now adopted by the Royal Dublin Society in the administration of the Government grant placed at their disposal for the improvement of the breeding of horses, it would be attended with satisfactory results. The word 'half-bred' stallions requires qualification. Stallions pure-bred on one side and on the other having several crosses of pure blood have been used with advantage; and the Association is of opinion that such half-bred stallions, if considered suitable, from their performance, their size, conformation, and action, should be encouraged and included in the register, and that their stock should participate in the same benefits as stock got by registered thoroughbred sires. There is another class of half-bred stallions, which may be termed 'mongrels,' that have little (if any) breeding on either side, and which, notwithstanding, are largely used by farmers, as the service fee is small; the produce in such cases is, comparatively speaking, worthless. The Association is not in favour of the introduction of Cleveland blood into the country. The crossing of a Shire brood mare with a thoroughbred horse is not to be recommended, in the hope of producing useful hunters or harness horses. It is possible that the mating of a brood mare of Hackney blood with a thoroughbred stallion may produce useful stock, but there is throughout the country a deep-rooted objection to the introduction of Hackney blood in any form; and it is significant, in support of this view, that English and foreign dealers, who buy horses largely in Ireland, object to it in the strongest manner. The Association submit herewith the names of gentlemen who are prepared to give evidence on the several points referred to in this letter, and trust the Commission will be good enough to hear and consider their statements."

That embraces chiefly the objects of the association, which was formed with a view to gather evidence generally by letter and by query form, a copy of which I wish to hand in, throughout the country, the information that could be got regarding the different breeds of horses throughout the country.

1565. To whom was that letter addressed?—That was sent into the Commission some three weeks ago.

1566. Then you issued a series of questions?—We issued a series of questions which I have handed in, and entered into correspondence with people upon the subject of horse-breeding generally, and obtained answers generally.

1567. You see we will be very glad to hear the opinions of this society you represent through you or through anybody else that the association likes to send, but I don't see how we can take in evidence anything in the nature of reports of your association which are based upon the answers to a series of questions without calling before us the people who answered those questions?—The bulk of them, my lord, will be prepared to come forward here and support their statements.

1568. But there are more than a hundred of them?—I have massed it and brought out their opinions, and if I may state it, as to the ratio in which it is given, as regards the different breeds of horses, if I may state that in bulk.

1569. Let me look at it. We shall be very happy to have any facts, any statistics, any information of that kind that you can give us now, but I think we will have to consider if your society wishes to put in a report founded on the opinion of a great number of people, we shall have to consider how to deal with it. We obviously cannot call before us as witnesses all the gentlemen who sent answers to your inquiry?—May I put in copies of replies received from those different dealers and gentlemen on the subject?

1570. No, I think not.—May I read their original letters?

1571. You have got the letter that you wrote to the Commission, I think you better give us any statistics you have got, and afterwards I will consult the members of the Commission as to how they shall deal with the other matters. Have you any statistical information?—Certainly.

1572. There were certain reports and things Mr. Roberts mentioned that he said he thought would come better from you?—Our association has been based entirely upon obtaining reliable evidence from the country upon the subject of horse-breeding generally.

1573. All I want you to understand is that we will be perfectly ready to hear that evidence, but it must come from somebody whom we can examine and cross-examine?—We shall be very pleased to submit to your lordship a great number of gentlemen. I have already handed in a list of names of parties wishing to be examined.

1574. Yes, but in the meantime have you got any information you can give us from yourself?—I am quite at your service to answer any questions.

1575. For instance, I think you said you were the inspector employed by the Royal Dublin Society?—I am.

1576. I should think you could give the Commission very valuable evidence of your experience in that capacity?—I have been, I may say, all over Ireland, and I have seen the different stallions.

1577. What are your duties as inspector?—I have seen nearly all these thoroughbred stallions, 235, that have been mentioned already to the Commission, the Dublin Society have been very strict in having these supervised, not only as regards veterinary examination, but otherwise, as to their shapes and confor mation.

1578. Do you inspect all the stallions that are registered?—I have not seen them all, for there were some of them accepted before I was brought into office, so to speak, I have seen the bulk of them.

1579. Also the mares that got nominations?—I have seen a number of those at the mare shows. I can give you a return of the sires throughout Ireland, as they are by counties, I can also give the ordinary agricultural returns as to the number of horses in Ireland.

1580. I think we have got them?—And the different breeds in the different counties, showing the proportion between the registered sires and all others in the counties.

1581. Mr. WRENCH.—Are you speaking only of the sires now?—Of the sires only now.

1582. The CHAIRMAN.—We should like to have all that very much?—In the County Antrim according to the agricultural statistics, I am quoting from the year 1895, there are 65 stallions, of that 7 are only registered under the Royal Dublin Society. In Armagh there are 26, whereas only 4 of those are thoroughbred registered sires. In Carlow there are 48 sires altogether, of which only 4 are registered. In Clare there are only 5 registered, whereas altogether there are 63 in it. In Cavan only 1 registered, whereas there are 51 sires altogether in it. In Cork there are 28 registered, and between Cork East Riding and Cork West Riding there are 266. Donegal, 2 registered; 59 altogether. Down, 7 registered; 86 altogether. Dublin, 16 registered; 78 altogether. Fermanagh, 4 registered; 28 altogether. Galway, 13 registered; 146 altogether. Kerry, 3 registered; 67 altogether. Kildare, 15 registered; 65 altogether. Kilkenny, 5 registered; 81 altogether. King's County, 1 registered; 71 altogether. Longford, 6 registered; 54 altogether. Leitrim, none registered; 20 altogether. Limerick, 16 registered; 88 altogether. Londonderry, none registered; 72 altogether. Louth, 4 registered; 50 altogether. Mayo, 1 registered; 64 altogether. Meath, 22 registered; 108 altogether. Monaghan, 3 registered; 35 altogether. Queen's County, 6 registered; 52 altogether. Roscommon, 5 registered; 48 altogether. Sligo, 6 registered; 36 altogether. Tipperary, 14 registered; North and South Riding; 154 altogether. Tyrone, 2 registered; 49 altogether. Waterford, 8 registered; 55 altogether. Westmeath, 8 registered; 62 altogether. Wexford, 12 registered; 133 altogether. Wicklow, 6 registered; 54 altogether. Total stallions in Ireland, 2,332; total registered, 234.

1583. Are the stallions belonging to the Congested Districts Board included in the total?—I presume they are in the agricultural statistics.

1584. Does it give the ages of the stallions?—Yes, it gives thoroughbred, half-bred, Hackney, Shire, Clydesdale, agricultural and all other breeds in each county.

1585. Can you give us them, you have given a total of 2,332, can you give us the proportion of the various breeds?—Yes, total thoroughbred sires in Ireland, 792; total half-bred sires in Ireland, 582; total Hackney, 111; total Shire, 49; total Clydesdale, 249; total agricultural, 470; all other breeds, 79. Total, 2,332 sires in the year 1895. I would not place great reliance on the total of throughbreds, for this reason, that some farmers call a horse thoroughbred, and he may have a stain, and it is very hard for the enumerators to get a correct report of them. I say that owing to the questions that were put to me myself in my own place by the enumerator when he came round. I asked him if he knew what it meant, and he seemed rather in the dark about it himself.

1586. Those are the figures of the Agricultural Returns?—Those are the Agricultural Returns for 1895.

1587. Are the ages given?—Not on that table, but they are given in another table.

1588. I mean the ages of those 2,332 stallions?—No, it does not give the ages of those.

1589. They are of every age?—Every age from twenty-seven years old, which is the oldest stallion I know serving in Ireland, down to two years at which I met a Hackney standing the other day in Kerry got by a Congested Districts sire.

1590. But those 2,332 stallions are all serving?—I could not say so.

1591. What do the returns pretend to give if they include all stallions, of course they would include all the thoroughbred yearlings and two year olds?

1592. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—They don't include race-horses?—"Table 17, showing by counties and provinces the number of sires serving mares in Ireland in the year 1895."

1593. Mr. WRENCH.—It is possible the same horse may be counted twice over, if it serves in two counties?—This return is taken at the man's place when the enumerator goes to him. I do not think he could be counted twice.

1594. The CHAIRMAN.—That gives 2,332, of which only 234 have been registered, perhaps you would explain to the Commission what steps are taken before a horse is registered?—Well, as far as my department goes, the sire in order to be registered, his name must be submitted on an application form to the Society, they require a sound certificate in the first instance, and go very strictly into the matter in every way it is possible to go to see that he would conform to their rules, and if there is any doubt then at all I have been sent for the last two years through the country to report upon these sires.

1595. Do you report as to their soundness?—No, unless there is something I am specially asked to point out, it is as to their conformation and action generally that I report.

1596. Do you know how many applications were made to the Society?—I think it says that in the front page, if you have the register there by you, applications were received in the year 1896 for the registration of 264 stallions.

1597. How many of them were accepted?—234, and a great many more applied for it the year before.

1598. Can you give us for 1895 the amount of applications, what I want to get out is that if there are only 234 registered out of this large number, I want to know whether there were many more applications that were not accepted?—This year there appear only to be 264 applications, that does not come within my department, I can only quote from what I read in the frontispiece.

1599. Then you have to go all over the country?—I do, I travel north, south, east, and west.

1600. Can you form a general opinion as to the 2,000 stallions in rough numbers that are not registered?—Well, I am sorry to say they are composed to a very large extent—I have seen a large number of them.

1601. Don't mention any particulars, I want your general opinion?—They are to a large extent of the most nondescript character that it is possible to imagine, chiefly standing at a very small fee, influenced very frequently by a glass of malt, as they call it in this country, the farmer very often is influenced to that extent, though he may be advertised for £1 or £2, but really the money that is paid is nothing approaching that, it is nearer 5s. in many cases. I am talking

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now of the very bad class, the nondescript class, that are responsible for the refuse that it has been told your lordship appears in the fairs in the country.

1602. That I hope does not apply to the whole of the 2,000?—I am not speaking with reference to the whole of the 2,000, of that there are nearly 800 thoroughbreds, I am speaking chiefly of the half-breds and nondescript class.

1603. Of course all you register are thoroughbred?—They are all thoroughbred and sound.

1604. Can you give any general information as to the thoroughbreds that are not registered?—I think their chief reason for not being registered must be that in the first place they are not sound, or else more applications would appear in that frontispiece to be registered, they are not able, I presume to put forward a sound certificate, many of them. Of course there are some people it is very hard to get to register, at the present day there is really no money inducement held out to any registered stallion like there was in the first scheme that came out of Queen's premiums.

1605. The only advantage of registration is the certificate that the horse is sound?—It is telling its tale from year to year to a marked extent, the farmers are anxious now to go to a stallion where they can see their way to give the fee, but unfortunately the fee is the stumbling block, that is what prevents the farmers going to these stallions in many cases, he goes unfortunately to the cheapest and also to the nearest stallion.

1606. May I take it that your opinion is, in view of the figures which you have given us, that the quantity of stallions is sufficient?—The quantity I should say is ample if the quality and conformation and soundness were right, we have ample stallions in the country as regards number.

1607. Do you think as a general rule that the stallions are the best adapted for the different districts they serve in?—No, I do not.

1608. Have you any suggestion to make as to how the quality of the stallions generally could be improved, and how they could be better selected as suitable for the various districts?—By registration.

1609. Registration conferring a certificate of soundness, and also of suitability?—Yes.

1610. Well now as to mares, what is your opinion?—The experience that I have gathered chiefly has been from the Mare Shows that I have attended in the last three or four years, and from those Shows that are inaugurated by the Dublin Society in connection with their horse-breeding schemes.

1611. And what opinion have you formed?—In some counties, and they differ to a very marked extent—in some counties the mares are particularly good, good size and good bone and of a good hardy breed, whereas in other counties they are not—I won't give a sweeping statement, but I say, to a large extent, in some counties, they are not fit to breed from.

1612. Not fit even for the local demand for agricultural purposes?—There are a great number that are unfit for this purpose, both from size and unsoundness, in some cases the farmer breeds in the poorer districts, from that that he cannot sell, unfortunately, from accident or unsoundness, he puts that to the cheapest horse in the hopes of making money, that is where the downfall has been, and the rubbish has appeared in the fairs as a result.

1613. You think the quality, as far as you could judge by fairs, has deteriorated?—It has in some places, I think the south stands out far ahead of the northern part as regards the quality, of course in some counties they are very keen indeed about going to a good horse.

1614. I am talking now about the mares, it has been suggested that there is a very great tendency on the part of the farmers, especially small farmers, to sell their best mares to go abroad and breed from inferior ones?—I think that is so, they sell their filly to a foreigner who will give a better price for a three-year old, and they sell them as remounts instead of retaining them. A great number of fillies go for remounts, I have heard it stated up to 65 per cent.

1615. Do you mean re-mounts for foreign countries?—For everywhere; it is thought at least 65 per cent. I think we provide re-mounts for the Italians now, and Dutch and French, and other governments.

1616. Is your experience long enough to enable you to form an opinion as to whether the mares are as good as they used to be, the general stamp of them? My experience cannot go over very many years, but certainly in the last ten years I would not say in some counties they had deteriorated at all; in fact I would say they had improved. I speak now more of the Counties Meath, Kildare, Tipperary, and Wexford.

1617. You think they have improved there?—I do.

1618. Well, as to other counties?—I think they have deteriorated to some extent.

1619. Have you any idea of the cause?—The cause is from what I stated before, my lord, that I think they have sold the good ones, and they have kept that to breed from that they could not sell from some causes, that I have before mentioned, accident or unsoundness.

1620. I forget whether in your letter to the Commission you made any suggestion as to the registration of mares?—We did not.

1621. Or dealing with the question of mares in any way?—Not to my knowledge or recollection.

1622. Have you any suggestion in that direction to make yourself?—I think that the old scheme that the Dublin Society had in 1894 was a better scheme than the present one, but I quite hold with Captain Fetherstonhaugh that if the two could be worked together in conjunction, that is by giving nominations to the mares and subsidising the stallions to some extent, it would work better. I think the money is spread over a large number of mares, and you get more in touch with them. But the present system of giving prizes to mares works particularly well in Kildare, and works well in Tipperary, at least about the Clonmel district it does; they are keener about horsebreeding in some counties than they are in others, but that may be owing to the fact that they have a better demand in those counties.

1623. In the questions you sent about the country did you include questions on these points?—They asked questions as to the class of mare, and as to what sire would be considered best suited to mate that mare with, and it was on that point that I wished to give you that table as to the replies received; I have not reduced one from the total amount of replies that has come in, and I find that 72 per cent. were in favour of the thoroughbred.

The CHAIRMAN.—We will go into that question another time.

1624. Lord ASHTOWN.—Don't you think one of the reasons for going back to the old scheme of the Royal Dublin Society was that the Society practically guaranteed the stallion owner part of the fees?—I believe they did.

1625. Would not that encourage the owner to keep better sires, to guarantee his fees; it is very hard to guarantee fees now?—But by the altered scheme of 1894–95, the money was more spread over the district, and I think in that way it did better.

1626. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Can you say what steps are taken to ensure soundness in the stallions?—The committee appointed for that purpose by the Dublin Society, and there are none more competent men, they oblige a certificate to be forwarded with the application, before they entertain it at all, of soundness from a qualified veterinary surgeon, and if they have any doubt at all upon the matter, they send their own special veterinary surgeon to give a certificate.

1627. Is that done every year?—No, not unless there are some points raised, and it is considered necessary to go further into the matter.

1628. Once a stallion is registered it is presumed he remains sound?—If he has arrived at the age of six years old and is sound then I think that they take it into consideration that he is fit for registration for future years then.

1629. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you mentioned that you came across a two year old Hackney stallion serving in Ireland, where was that?—That was at Kenmare, I was there on behalf of this association this year to see the stock got by the Congested Districts Board sires at Kenmare show, I saw him there, he was two years old, he had been driven in a car and he covered ten mares this year.

1630. He did not belong to the Congested Districts Board?—No.

1631. Lord ASHTOWN.—He was a half-bred Hackney?—I could not say but I have not lost sight of him in my mind's eye yet.

1632. Lord RATHDONNELL.—If you have any notes concerning him I should like to hear them?—He was a two year old bay entire colt by "Fashion III," he was trained, he did not go well at all behind, he had fair action in front, he covered ten mares this year.

1633 Any size about him?—He was 13.3, I put the standard to him.

1634. Did he show any bone?—Fair action in front, goes close, goes badly behind, yes, I thought, the bone in the stock I saw there, and I saw a number of them, was by no means small to look at, not good bone to handle, to put your hand on and run it down, it was not small bone to look at.

1635. Mr. CAREW.—You say, Captain Tuthill, you are Inspector on behalf of the Royal Dublin Society?—I am.

1636. What are your duties in that capacity?—In connection with the registry of thoroughbred sires in Ireland.

1637. In that capacity don't you see to the soundness of these registered sires?—I am not a qualified veterinary surgeon.

1638. If you saw any patent defect you would call the attention of the society to it?—I am supposed to give a full report.

1639. Col. ST. QUINTON.—You have been all round Ireland at more shows and fairs than most men, could you not give us some idea as to what the produce of the various crosses are like, where there have been crosses such as Shire horses and Hackneys up in the north, whether they have matured into horses of any size or whether they have failed to grow as they do in England?—To which breed especially do you refer?

1640. The various breeds you have referred to, the Clydesdale and Shire horse and Hackney?—In Longford I have seen some big stock there, there is a good deal of the Clydesdale blood there.

1641. Do they grow into big active horses or not?—No, they chiefly grow to 15·3 hands high and go to make strong trammers and vanners and are sold to the northern dealers about two years old, they inundate that portion of the country and take them up north; and that accounts for the large number of horses in the north; they are bred in large quantites in the south and sold to the north, from thence they go into the southern parts of Scotland and northern parts of England.

1642. But it is also the case not only with these horses but in an immense number of the riding horses of the south of Ireland find their way up to the small farmers in the north, they are taken up by the small dealers and sold to small farmers at one and a half or two year olds, they are kept and stabled during the winter and go back into the dealers' hands and then go across the water chiefly as foreign remounts?—That is what I have seen.

1643. But now at these shows there is a variety of crosses there?—There are.

1644. Have you ever seen any useful horses that you could place, because unless you can place a horse he is not much use?—I have seen several I considered almost useless. At the late Ballinasloe show I saw a lot of stock there that I don't know what purpose they were bred for, what could be done with them now-a-days when the general utility horse is not so largely in demand.

1645. But have you seen any useful draft horses bred anywhere in the south?—I have, I have seen in Waterford a lot of horses not quite so good as what you call half-bred; they have been sold, but those have gone for better purposes, stronger remounts—artillery remounts.

1646. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you see any way in which the registration of the Royal Dublin Society could be improved, or do you look upon it now as a very perfect system; has anything struck you in your carrying it out—did you see anything we might do that is not done now?—I don't see anything further that could be done; I think it meets with the approval of the people throughout the country. I don't think there are near enough stallions in Ireland registered for the requirements, and it would be the greatest boon to the country if we had a number suitable to cover the mares of the country at a reasonable fee.

1647. But do you think the people appreciate the registration now more than they did last year?—Without question.

1648. And it is becoming recognised as a good thing to have their horses on the register?—Certainly.

1649. So, practically, most men who could get on and have not got on have some good reason for not being there?—That goes without saying.

1650. You have not formed any opinion as to what becomes of the animals bred in the north?—Yes; I think they nearly all go over the water, except those utilised in the country for agricultural purposes.

1651. Do you think most of the animals bought in the northern fairs are bought by English and Scotch dealers?—I think they are at Moy fair and others taken over the water.

1652. The CHAIRMAN.—In what capacity did you pay this visit to Kenmare?—I went to see the stock that were got round about Kenmare, and at the Congested Districts Board Show at Kenmare.

1653. That was the purpose, but I asked you in what capacity you went?—I went on behalf of the Irish Horse Breeding Association.

1654. Do you know the congested districts generally yourself?—I do, I know Mayo, and some of the west beyond Galway; I don't know any of the northern portion.

1655. I mean can you give us any information based on your own observations of the Hackney produce anywhere else than at Kenmare?—I have met them in several places; I wanted to try and meet them in an open class, and I found them at Bray show on the 5th August of this year in an open class there, and in the classes open for harness or hunting purposes for yearlings, two-year olds and three-year olds, where the Hackney and the thoroughbred met in open competition, the stock got by thoroughbred in every case took all the prizes.

1656. I was asking you rather could you give any information of your own knowledge, similar to what you have told us about Kenmare, in other parts of the congested districts, did you visit any other portions?—I did not go specially to any other district, but you will have ample evidence of that from other parties.

1657. You mentioned this one particular horse at Kenmare; is there anything else you would like to say to the Commission?—I saw those at Hollymount this year, and drove one going to the show; it was not a very gaudy goer, it had to take time every now and again to get its wind, and I was very late for the show on the second day on account of it.

1658. Mr. WRENCH.—How old was he?—Four years old.

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1659. It could not have been one of our horses?—No, but there is another stallion in the district; I am giving a reply entirely on the subject of Hackneys. I was also at the Cork show this year, and observed the driving competition there. I am afraid the driving track was not quite small enough for a couple that went down there to get prizes; they were very much distressed, the Hackneys were in a frightful lather, the blood horses won the prizes. One was got by an American sire brought it into this country some years ago.

1660. The CHAIRMAN.—One what?—One of the horses that got the prize there; it was by an American trotter.

1661. Did you see many specimens of the produce of the Congested Districts Hackneys at Kenmare?—I did. I suppose I saw quite forty; the foals by "Fireaway" struck me as being in many cases shapely nice looking fillies.

1662. Were they mostly foals?—I could give you the exact return. I think there were about thirteen yearlings, fifteen foals, all by "Fireaway"—a very nice well made lot; the yearlings were not as good a lot.

1663. Two-year olds?—There were twelve entries; they were very flat-sided, bad shoulders.

1664. Were any of them sold?—Oh, yes, but not at that show; they are sold in that district, and bought by men who take them up into the southern parts of Limerick and part of Cork; I know the names of the men who take them up.

1665. Are they bought as foals?—They are bought as foals and yearlings.

1666. You don't know what prices are given for them?—Yes; as foals and yearlings they go to about £4 or £5, and beyond that age £8; they seldom keep them on there, although in two or three cases I did meet men that were going to keep their mares; they had taken prizes at previous shows and were branded, and by that means they were to get a free service, and that was their inducement to go back to that breed.

1667. You say these go into the southern parts of Limerick and Cork?—Yes.

1668.—What are they bought for?—They are bought by the small farmers for working purposes, and I suppose eventually for breeding.

1669. That is only a supposition, you don't know?—I have not seen them bred from. They are also bought in the west in the Connemara districts and they are brought up to Edgeworthstown and Longford and up to Strokestown, which are all hunter-breeding districts.

1670. Lord ASHTOWN.—They buy these horses as foals down at Kenmare?—They buy them as foals and yearlings.

1671. Mr. WRENCH.—What did you think of the mares at Kenmare?—With some few exceptions they were not a good lot.

1672. A great many common and coarse?—Yes, they were common, still I thought that if mated with a horse with really good shoulders they might have produced useful animals.

1673. Did you notice that they were very much in-kneed the mares?—Some of them, some of them were calf-kneed.

1674. Do you know that the two year olds had been left out on the mountain?—Yes, some of them had come some distance, I don't know that they had come off the mountain, but I don't think that would alter their flat-sidedness.

1675. It is a very poor district?—I would not say that altogether, there is some of it good land, I drove some portions of that quite capable of feeding horses.

1676. On which side?—On the north-western side of Kenmare.

1677. Where were you going from?—I went over the station crossing and turned to the right and went to a lot of farms up that road, and then turned and came back to the right, right round the valley.

1678. It was all fairly near the town?—I did not go too far out, I saw a number of stock on the land that enabled me to judge, I saw stock by other horses too on the land outside.

1679. Sir W. GILBEY.—At these fairs I suppose there were many foals?—This was a show, there were only foals by the Board's stallions that stood there the year before.

1680. The CHAIRMAN.—Were there any foals by any other stallion except Hackney stallions?—I saw some but not at the show, there would only be allowed at this show what were got by the Board's stallions.

1681. But the Board have other stallions?—They had only the one stallion there that year.

The Commission adjourned to November 17th.

FOURTH DAY.—TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17TH, 1896.

Present:—LORD RATHDONNELL in the Chair: Mr. WRENCH, Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, and COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

CAPTAIN TUTHILL re-examined.

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Captain J. F. Tuthill.

1682. The CHAIRMAN.—Captain Tuthill, I think you have some documents you wished to hand in to the Commission as part of your evidence—please state what they are?—Yes, my lord, in accordance with the consent given by you I will put them in. They are copies of letters received from different people in England on the subject of Hackney breeding. They are from Lord Coventry, J. M. Richardson, Willoughby De Broke, Owen C. Wallis, Gordon Cunard, W. Forbes, Lord Chesham, East and Co., Wimbush and Co., S Hames, A. J. Brown, J. Schawle, F. J. Grainger, E. C. Brown, John Lett, Arthur Topham, Henry Ford, George Richardson, John Hetherington, W. Chatterton, Alfred Withers, M. and W. Milton, John Darby, James Hutchinson, D. L. Beatty, John Johnson, John J. Thompson, George Nourse, J. O. Housin, F. P. Baker, George A. Miller, A Gemmell and Sons. These letters, my lord, and also another pamphlet I have received from the same people, I hand in referring to the breeding of horses in Ireland, and any of these gentlemen will be pleased to come before you to give evidence on the question of the introduction of Hackneys; their opinions are entirely against the Hackney blood being introduced, and they say the introduction of this strain in Yorkshire has ruined it as a hunter and harness breeding county. I have made a calculation as to the expenditure annually on horses for harness and hunting purposes bought in Ireland by English buyers who have communicated with our Association on horse-breeding and who are opposed to the introduction of Hackney blood into the country. They represent in figures £265,000—a very large item. I also beg to lay before your lordship the original resolutions of the following Societies throughout Ireland, condemnatory of the importation of Hackney sires into this country. These Societies and Shows are considered by all competent authorities the

best means of encouraging horse-breeding in Ireland and a good ready and convenient mart for the sale of horses. They are from Clonmel Horse Show Society, Mullingar Horse Show Society, the Meath Horse Show Society, the County Cork Agricultural Society, the Limerick Horse Show Society, and the Ballinasloe, County Galway, Agricultural Society. If there is any other point I can give your lordship information on I shall be very pleased as regards my capacity under the Dublin Society, and going to shows throughout the country on their behalf. I shall be very pleased to give you any little information I have at my disposal. Perhaps I might also mention that the sum of money notified to me by the Irish dealers who are against the importation of Hackney stallions into this country is an annual expenditure of £170,000. They represent that amount in money.

1683. Mr. WRENCH.—As I understand, you have handed in the returns which show how that is made up?—Yes.

1684. Where is the particular return which shows the £170,000?—That is the amount shown by the replies received by our association.

1685. You will have to put in the figures to show what each man pays?—These gentlemen will, if necessary, all appear before you and state it for themselves.

1686. You ought to show how these figures are made up; if you put in a figure you should put in also a statement showing how it is made up?—I have one letter here, I have not brought the whole lot. George Richardson of Leeds, for instance, spends £30,000.

1687. I am afraid the figure of £170,000 would be of no use to us unless we get the details—how it is made up?—I can furnish you with it.

1688. The CHAIRMAN.—We can authorize our Secretary to receive it and you can hand it in to him?—For instance, I have Mr. Hetherington's £6,000 which he spends; and Messrs. Milton, London, £17,000. I stupidly left it to my clerk to have it made out.

1689. Mr. WRENCH.—Is the £170,000 the amount they spend on horses in Ireland?—Yes.

1690. Last year or for how many years?—Last year. I am quoting simply those buyers in England who are opposed to the introduction of Hackney blood into this country, as they say themselves it is of all others the country in which they can buy the horses they want chiefly as harness horses.

1691. The CHAIRMAN.—This paper you have handed in would not be complete unless you have the details of the amount you mention?—I stupidly left it to the office to fill them up for me, but I will hand it in later on.

1692. Have you any further papers or evidence to hand in?—No, I have nothing further in the shape of documents which I was authorized to hand in to-day from the last sitting. But if there is any information that I can give while I am here I will be very pleased. I have gone a good deal through Ireland on behalf of the Royal Dublin Society, and attended shows, and if there is any point on which I can give any information I shall be very pleased.

1693. There is one question I would like to ask you, as to half-bred sires?—Yes, that point was mentioned chiefly by, I think, Major Studdert or Mr. Roberts, that they would accept them under very restricted conditions, thus only then would they register them. Of course there are numbers throughout the country. I have seen stock got by "Mackintosh," "Reliable," "Traverser," "Lochinvar," and numerous others that have got exceptionally good produce at these shows. They have brought great prices. Perhaps I might refer more especially to "Mackintosh" and "Traverser." Curiously enough they are in the one county, and I think Messrs. East would give more for horses got by these sires than others. Then there is "Mayboy," and "Assessor," "Perfection," "Dick Turpin," "After Dark," "Revolt," "Harkaway," "Thunderbolt"—a horse which gets wonderful stock in the county Galway. They sell for very good prices. There is another in the North—"Erin's Fraud." He has done very well, and there is "Reveller." Some of these horses have got exceptionally good stock. They are practically thoroughbred—the majority of them,—and I have known their stock to sell as four-year-olds for as much as £200 or £250 a-piece as harness colts—exceptional harness colts. Black-browns in the county Limerick bring exceptionally high prices. Those stock by "Reliable" have made themselves noted as hunters; weight-carrying men would give a good deal for a good horse by "Reliable." He was by "Old Victor"—a very good horse. I think he is living still and standing in Fethard.

1694. You say these are half-bred horses. What stain is in them?—Well, it is barely a stain. It is not a stain in the case of "Mayboy," though he is not tabulated in the Stud Book. He appears in a whole page by himself, more than any other horse there. He and "Assessor" are half-brothers out of the one dam. "Assessor" is by "Arbitrator" and "Mayboy" by "Xenophon." But as to the others, one of them has practically three crosses of thoroughbred blood on the dam's side; one has four crosses on the dam's side. Now, "Lochinvar," a horse I saw at Hollymount Show this year, I calculated it up to see how his stock came out, and he took more prizes than any horse, if you tabulated it by the sire. He has a slight stain. He is by "Lothario," out of "Eileen Oge," I think, a really wonderful horse. He ran a great number of races in this country, and has been very successful as a sire. I mention this because an exceptionally strong point was made by Major Studdert and Mr. Roberts as to whether they would not be admitted on a separate register by the Royal Dublin Society.

1695. And you are of opinion it would be advisable to have them registered?—Yes, I think so, but a hard and fast line would have to be drawn as regards the stain. I do not know how far it would not be wise to insist upon them proving themselves good stock-getters prior to being registered. That would be a matter for a competent body to decide.

1696. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know the fewest number of thoroughbred crosses on the dam's side of any of these horses you have mentioned as good sires?—Well, I do not; I could not answer that question straight off. I know one horse who gets exceptionally good stock, and I know one of them that sold well last year.

1697. How many crosses has he?—I think he had only one. He was got by a thoroughbred horse out of a very good-looking mare by a Clydesdale. He was a very good-looking horse and could jump a fence as well as any horse, but he would not go more than fifteen minutes—£500 was paid for him.

1698. What kind are his stock?—They have taken prizes at some of the shows.

1699. Have you seen any of them?—I have.

1700. You don't know what they have done in the hunting field?—No, I only traced that one up.

1701. But in putting horses on a separate register would you insist on there being any special number of crosses on the dam's side?—Without exception.

1702. How many?—Certainly not less than three on the dam's side.

1703. And in addition to that would you require them to have been proved as being good stock getters?—Well, I would personally, though I have heard it stated they should be accepted without having been proved.

1704. Colonel ST QUINTIN.—How could you arrive at that. They would have to be serving some years before you could prove their stock?—It would defer the acceptation of these sires for some years, five years. But there is no doubt that those horses that used to be ridden in days gone by, hunter sires, some got wonderfully good stock. There was a horse called Zinganee that the late Lord Waterford had, he got fine stock. I gave myself £100 and £120

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for two unbroken four-year-olds by him the year before last, and I got second prize in Dublin for one of them. Zinganee used to be ridden by Lord Waterford constantly.

1705. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know how many crosses he had of thoroughbred blood?—I do not. He came from the south. He stood at Wicklow for the last two years. One of the best hunters we have in County Meath, now ridden by our Master, Mr. John Watson, a black-brown horse by "Reliable." He takes his fences slow, but no hunt is too long for him.

1706. At the last sitting you gave figures as to the number of thoroughbred sires in Ireland. You gave them from the Registrar-General's returns, did you not?—Yes, I did, from the Agricultural returns of 1895.

1707. Have you any reason to believe they are correct?—I have every reason to believe they are not correct as to thoroughbreds.

1708. Then as to the number 792 as the number of thoroughbred stallions, you would not say that is correct?—I would not like to set myself against the enumerator, but I know what the enumerator asked me in my own yard.

1709. But you did not give these figures in as correct?—I gave them as quoted from table 17, page 77

1710. Then you would not wish them to be assumed to be the actual number of animals standing in Ireland?—I would not dispute a blue-book so beautifully got up as that.

1711. In your opinion is it correct?—I did not prepare it myself, and I would not swear to it.

1712. You have not made any inquiries to test it to see if it is correct?—Well, I have. I have been trying to make up a return of sires in every county.

1713. And how does it compare with the record in the blue-book?—I can't get the thoroughbreds to tally, and I find there should be an increase in the half-breds and all other breeds. For instance, the enumerators ask this question—"Is he registered?" What they call registered is—is he in a stud-book. If they say he is registered they might put down a Hackney into the thoroughbred return if he said he was registered in the Book.

1714. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there any further statement you wish to make?—No. I have been to the different shows through Ireland, at Cork, Limerick, and Hollymount, and seen stock by different sires through Ireland, and I have been at Mullingar and Navan shows this year, and could tell if necessary about the stock I saw there.

Mr. David Russell.

Mr DAVID RUSSELL, Knockboy, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, examined.

1715. The CHAIRMAN.—You are a farmer, and live in the County Antrim?—Yes, my lord.

1716. Have you any personal experience of the breeding of horses?—I have been breeding for about eighteen years.

1717. What dams have you generally used, and what sires?—I have used thoroughbred sires, Yorkshire coaching horses, Norfolk Hackney, and half-bred horses, and the dams have been what we call the old Irish breed.

1718. As to the dams?—Well, they are half-breeds I have been using principally, that is to say the result of thoroughbred horses and an ordinary half-bred mare, which I can scarcely describe, but a class of mare the produce of one cross, probably of a thoroughbred, and it may have been a Cleveland, Yorkshire, or Shire.

1719. You say you have used the half-bred dam, what has been your experience in using such animals and the half-bred sire?—Well, if put to a fairly strong mare up-sized of 15.3 to 16 hands, they get good marketable stock.

1720. Can you give us any information as to the half-bred sire used—what crossing he had?—Well, he was bred from a thoroughbred horse, but it is very very hard to describe the dam, that is to say, she has been a cross probably from a thoroughbred and from a Yorkshire coaching mare, or what we call the old Irish mare that has been in our country for generations.

1721. Have you used a Hackney sire?—Just twice.

1722. What was the result?—Well, I sold the horse as a four-year-old and he seemed to turn out fairly well. I have one two-year-old at present, and I have a mare carrying a foal to a Hackney. That is my only experience in Hackney breeding.

1723. Are many horses bred by the farmers in your district or neighbourhood?—A great many.

1724. Can you give any description of the type of mare usually used in your part of the country for breeding purposes?—Well, they are usually from 15 to 15.2 hands in height with lots of muscle, good flat bones, very active, sharp, with plenty of go and mettle about them, and as a rule fairly clean legs and not much hair on them.

1725. Have you had any experience of breeding from two-year-old mares?—Yes, very considerable.

1726. Can you give us any opinion on that?—Well, I do no think it desirable from my experience to breed from a two-year-old mare unless she is up-sized, and then I would only breed from her at a very early age, that is at a very early part of the season, I would not put her to the horse later than the month of May, my reason for so saying is that otherwise she foals late and as a rule they don't milk well unless they foal well, and the foal won't winter well if it is a late foal; the mare has not been developed thoroughly at two years old. That is my experience.

1727. Have you bred from a three-year old mare?—Yes, I always follow, and I find three-year-old foals are stronger; the mother is better able to nourish them, and they are better able to winter, and consequently better colts, that is from a three-year-old mare, that has been served as three-year-old, foaling as four.

1728. Have you found any difference in the amount of milk a two-year-old mare can give as compared with a three-year-old mare?—Nothing further than the appearance of the foal. That is to say the foal always appears better nourished. It seems to be a fatter foal and more muscular, but as to a given quantity of milk that is a thing I could not say.

1729. Do the farmers appreciate a good sire, and are they willing to pay a fair price down in your part of the country?—They seem getting to do so more than formerly. Formerly they did not appreciate a good sire—they seemed to appreciate the money more. That is to say, they did not seem to care to pay too high a fee for a sire even if they got a good one.

1730. Do you think now they would pay?—I think more so, owing to the inducement held out by the Royal Dublin Society, because they find it remunerative, and also that there is a better class of stock it pays them better to breed from; the poor common class of horses are really a drug in the market.

1731. Have many Hackneys been bred in your neighbourhood?—A good many. One season about six years ago there was a good many bred. There have not been many since then up to the last two or three years. There are more being bred now.

1732. You say it is on the increase?—I should not say so. That was a particularly good year—that is to say, from the owner of the Hackney stallion point of view.

1733. Have you a sufficient number of suitable sires in your district?—Well, I should say so; that is to say, suitable for the district, but I think they might be improved upon.

1734. What class of sires is generally used in the district there?—Well, half-bred horses.

1735. You mentioned the Royal Dublin Society

just now; have you had any experience of the benefits derived from the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes. I am the owner of a sire under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, and I know one instance where a man put his mare to my sire, and as a two-year-old it realized £100, and foals, not from mine alone, but from others—other registered sires under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme—have been selling very well as yearling foals; besides, it has been a strong inducement to the farmers to improve and retain their better class of mares.

1736. Do you think the poorer farmers derive any advantage from the scheme?—Yes, decidedly; it is the poorer farmers who do—that is, farmers from 20 to 30 acres, who breed most. I should say that 50 per cent. of the farmers who breed are the holders of holdings of from 20 to 30 acres. They are the class who breed most. Of course the larger farmers are exempt, owing to the stipulation that the valuation must be under £150, and cannot be over that.

1737. Now, what class of horses do you think your district can breed to the best advantage?—Would you say, my lord, for the particular wants of the farmers or, from the financial point of view, to sell?

1738. Well, take the financial point of view—what class of horse should a man breed?—I think from a large-sized thoroughbred horse, an up-sized thoroughbred horse.

1739. Well, from the other point of view?—They get a very useful horse from a half-bred or Hackney for doing their own particular work—farming work. They are able to do that kind of work and the Hackney, for example, and do any driving or family harnessing they require, and I think they are very easily trained.

1740. Have you any suggestions to make to improve the horse-breeding in your district?—I think there might be something done by offering more valuable prizes to the owners of mares to retain their better class of mares in the country, and in connection with that I would suggest the age of five years should be the limit allowed. The Royal Dublin Society, according to the present scheme, limit them to four-year-old maiden mares, which should, I think, be extended to five years old, and they would thereby have a mare fully developed that has proven herself by her shapes and appearance that she is really a good mare; at the same time I would be disposed to strike out the prizes for foals under the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society.

1741. Mr. La Touche.—The prizes for foals, would you omit that?—Yes, and extend the limit as I say to five years old. The foal is really like a baby, and it alters very much, and you can't tell much about it.

1742. I did not hear the first part of your evidence, so you will stop me if I ask anything that has been asked before. You keep mares yourself.—Yes.

1743. And you keep a stallion?—Yes.

1744. One?—Two at present.

1745. Is one a thoroughbred?—Yes.

1746. And the other?—A Yorkshire coaching horse.

1747. You said the mares in the country were useful, rather smallish mares?—Yes.

1748. How are they bred as a rule?—From thoroughbred horses and half-bred mares, and a thoroughbred horse again. There is one cross in them, probably on the dam side.

1749. As a rule the farmers have been in the habit of using a thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

1750. Do the farmers up there breed many horses for selling outside their own requirements?—I should say a considerable number.

1751. Where do they sell them?—Well, the best market is in Dublin.

1752. Do they send them up from Ballymena to Dublin?—Yes, we frequently take the prizes down to the north

1753. And sell them to dealers?—Yes, or private gentlemen

1754. You said that about six years ago you bred pretty largely from Hackneys; that there has not been so much since, but that there has been a revival?—Quite so.

1755. To what do you attribute the giving up of the breeding of Hackneys six years ago?—The failure of the sire, that is the failure of the produce. It was so disappointing to the farmers who put mares to him that they would not use him for the second year.

1756. They did not get such good prices for their young stock?—Yes, and I think they anticipated more than they were likely to realise. As regards quality, we had an exceptionally good horse "Excelsior," but I think the percentage was very small of what we might call tip-top horses or even second-rate horses as far as Hackney horses go.

1757. He was, you think, an exceptionally good horse?—Yes.

1758. A Hackney?—Yes, a Norfolk Hackney.

1759. Are there any thoroughbred Hackney mares in that part of the country?—The only thoroughbred Hackney mare I think Mr. Martin is the owner of.

1760. You said that the produce of one of your sires as a four-year-old sold for £100?—A two-year-old at Belfast show.

1761. What was it got by?—By "Mascarelle."

1762. A thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

1763. That is an unusual price I should say?—No, I should not say so, I think larger prices were realised by Mrs. Anderson at Ballymoney for two-year-olds.

1764. Was the dam of this two-year-old thoroughbred?—Well, just a stain, the mare was not entered in the Stud Book, but she was almost eligible, the horse was by "Master Kildare."

1765. You spoke of the price of saleable foals, do they sell their young stock as foals?—Very few, the foals would realise from £6 to £9.

1766. Whatever they are got by?—By a better class horse they would realise more. If a horse is known to be a good breeder the foal will realise £1 or 30s. more.

1767. Is it your experience that the foal got by a half-bred horse or Hackney is a more likely looking animal to the eye as a foal than one got by a thoroughbred?—Yes; very much better looking. It pleases the farmer, "fills his eye," in other words it looks like a useful horse. It is the custom to work them up to three or four years old, and sell them as five years old, and, as a rule, the half-bred sells better than the thoroughbred.

1768. Colonel St. Quintin.—Do the farmers up in your district breed weighty draught horses?—Very little owing to the character of the district. They do not make it a specialty in breeding. The land is of light gravelly soil and comparatively hilly, and active horses from 15 to 15.2 hands are more suitable and beneficial.

1769. The light class of horse—light van or bus horses is what they breed?—Yes.

1770. And not heavy draught horses?—No, we have a Shire horse in the district and there are a few mares put to him, but the mares are not pure bred.

1771. But for that class of horse for their own purposes—what we should call light van horses or light useful agricultural horses—do you prefer the Cleveland, or Shire, or Hackney?—I prefer the Yorkshire coaching horse; as a proof of that I have one, I got him from that point of view, the financial point of view, to put to my own mares, because I was getting them too light by following the thoroughbred stock.

1772. He is a stronger horse?—Yes, a good deal more bone, good flat legs, and good action, and up to 16.3.

1773. You were speaking about breeding from two or three-year-olds, and Lord Rathdonnell asked you about the milk from the mares and other questions, have you noticed the difference in size and growth of

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the foals between two and three-year-olds?—Yes, those from two-year-old mares are smaller and not so well nourished, and we observe when we are weaning the foals that we can take less milk from the two-year-old than we get from the three-year-old.

1774. They don't develop into such fine large animals as those from the three-year-olds?—No, certainly not, for the first two years. It will take a year longer to develop.

1775. Mr. WRENCH.—You said you have for your own purposes a thoroughbred horse and a Yorkshire coaching horse?—Quite so.

1776. How many mares do you allow the thoroughbred to serve?—Sixty.

1777. That is rather above the average of people who keep horses?—Yes.

1778. He is a good server?—Yes, a very good foal getter.

1779. What price do you get?—For the season I get £3 3*s*., and 5*s*. grooms' fees, and £6 10*s*. for the foal, but then of course there are a great many farmers come for the season, and if they have no foal they have paid their money.

1780. And if they like to wait on the chance of a foal they pay £6 10*s*.?—Yes, I should say more farmers go in for the system of the season than for the foal. I have a larger percentage of season men than I have going in for the foal.

1781. That applies to both horses?—Yes.

1782. How many do you let the Yorkshire horse serve?—Twenty-five.

1783. Not more?—He would serve more but he did not get more. He is capable of serving any amount.

1784. They like the thoroughbred best?—Yes, he is accepted more. They derive more advantage under the horse-breeding scheme. There is one three miles off—standing at Ballymena—under the horse-breeding scheme.

1785. Your own mares; what class of mares do you breed yourself?—Good, strong ones—they vary in size—I have one mare I breed from 16.2, most are 16 hands, or 15.3, and there are two and three-year-olds not more than 15 hands.

1786. They are not mares of pedigree?—No, I have not a thoroughbred mare.

1787. Have you crossed any of their gets with a thoroughbred horse again?—Yes.

1788. Do you find they are getting lighter in bone?—I do, very much, I think they are deteriorating.

1789. Then you think it is necessary to take in some horse to correct the perpetual breeding with a thoroughbred horse?—Quite so, that was my reason for getting the Yorkshire coaching horse to get size and more bone.

1790. I think you said you bred twice from a Norfolk Hackney, was that Excelsior in both cases?—Yes.

1791. But you sold one as a four-year-old?—Yes.

1792. What price did you get?—£55.

1793. That was unbroken?—No, trained to ride.

1794. Have you a two-year-old coming on bred in the same way?—Yes.

1795. Out of the same mare?—No, out of a different mare.

1796. And that practically is your only experience of breeding from a Hackney?—Yes.

1797. Have you seen many Hackneys?—Yes, I have seen a great many foals and horses.

1798. You consider "Excelsior" a good horse?—Yes, of his class.

1799. Rather heavy head?—He was not sweet.

1800. Not much quality?—No, but a fine mover.

1801. I think you talked about the mares of the old Irish breed, can you trace in any way this old Irish breed in your neighbourhood?—Well, no, I could not trace it. I could not go back, but it is generally admitted that these mares have not been imported much. They must have been crossed with Yorkshire or thoroughbred.

1802. I suppose they were practically kept small because the necessities of the situation did not require large mares?—Yes, that is it.

1803. Any heavy coarse blood like Shire or Clydesdale is not required there?—They are not wanted in the district.

1804. You think they would do harm?—I should think the farmers would not accept of them, would not find them beneficial to work their farms.

1805. There are not many carthorse stallions in your district now?—No, not much in the Shire or Clydesdale.

1806. But there are a great many so-called half-bred horses?—Quite so.

1807. And a great deal of rubbish?—A great deal indeed. I may say the bulk of it.

1808. Is there any way of knowing if these half-breds are sound?—There is no way of knowing; indeed, there is a way of knowing that they are not sound.

1809. You say, I think, that farmers of twenty or thirty acres comprise fifty per cent. of the horse breeders in your district?—Yes, that is so.

1810. Do you think that the opinion of these men should be taken as to the class of sires they would require if sires were to be provided by public money?—I certainly think the opinion of these men should be taken as to their own requirements; as a rule they are an intelligent, hard headed, shrewd people, quite capable of knowing what it is they require.

1811. And you think there ought to be some way of taking their opinion as to the best class of horses for them?—Yes, I think so.

1812. When you say that the best market is Dublin, I suppose you mean for the class you yourself breed?—Yes, I breed some here and sell them here.

1813. You generally bring them to the show and sell them in the show?—Yes.

1814. That is your market?—Well, I have sold in Moy, at home, and in Dublin.

1815. What would you consider the best market for the small farmers?—Ballymena, and a fair called Creebelley.

1816. What buyers are there there?—Scotch, English, and Belfast men.

1817. Chiefly?—Yes.

1818. None of these big carriage horses that Messrs. East buy are bred in the district?—Not in that district; there may be an exceptional one but that is all.

1819. What age do they sell their horses at?—Four or five years: they give them light work as two-years rising three, work them on regularly, and sell them as four or five-year-olds as they find a market.

1820. Are there many people in your district who buy horses in the South of Ireland and bring them down and feed them?—There are a good many.

1821. Bought in the south and then fed and s[old] at the Moy as four or five years old?—Yes.

1822. The CHAIRMAN.—You used the expres[sion] Yorkshire coaching horse, is that any recogn[ised] breed as distinct from Hackney?—Yes, there is [a] a distinct studbook.

1823. And the horse you have, what is he?—H[e] a pure Yorkshire coaching horse registered in [the] stud-book.

1824. In your opinion do more horses of the fo[ur] and five-year-old class sold in your district go t[o] Scotland and England or travel southwards?—T[o] Scotland and England chiefly.

1825. Mr. WRENCH.—Talking of these smal[l] breeders who have twenty or thirty acres, don't you think that action is a very valuable attribute in their breeds?—Yes, I think so.

1826. Is not that what the dealer first looks for?—Yes.

1827. And won't a moderate horse with good actio[n] sell better than a better horse with indifferen[t] action?—Yes, it is most necessary.

1828. Then action is a valuable attribute?—Yes.

1829. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—To the purchaser or the seller?—I don't quite understand your question.

1830. Would the horses be more valuable to the sellers or buyers because of action?—I should say to both, because the purchaser becomes the seller.

1831. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you been able to form an opinion as to whether a Hackney with good action gets a foal with better action than the thoroughbred?—I have from my thoroughbred horse some foals which I would compare their action with the ordinary Hackneys; as a rule foals have good action as foals; that drops away as they become yearlings and two-year-olds, from the thoroughbred it drops away, which I don't think it will from the Hackney, because it is more or less natural.

1832. You think the Hackney would be able to produce stock that when it developed would have better action?—That is higher action.

1833. Harness horses?—Yes, I quite agree with you.

1834. Do you think if there were better sires in the locality the trade might be developed of breeding harness horses?—I think it is very desirable to get a better class of horses for getting up-sized and high priced harness horses.

1835. You think it would pay?—I think there would be a demand for a good sized, up-sized harness horse. I think the market is glutted with poor sized horses, and owing to the general use of the bicycle and the probable use of the motor car these horses are more likely to be a glut in the market.

1836. Have you been in many fairs recently?—Not recently.

1837. In the last few months?—No.

1838. You don't know whether it is a fact that there are a great many horses unsaleable now?—There are a certain class, but I think the good class horses people are as anxious to buy as ever.

1839. You think these people who do produce horses now, like small farmers, are deserving of help to produce a better article?—Yes, more so than the larger farmers, who can afford to pay a good fee, if they would only do it, for the use of a sire.

1840. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You speak of breeding fine up-standing carriage horses—how would you proceed to breed one—by what means?—I would expect to breed them from a high class mare to begin with, and a cross with a Yorkshire horse or a strong thoroughbred with high action.

1841. Mr. Wrench asked you about getting the opinion of the small farmers who breed these horses—don't you think the opinion of men who live in the country like yourself is as valuable as that of these farmers?—I don't know, that is an invidious question.

1842. Don't you think you know the requirements of the farmers who farm thirty acres quite as well as they do themselves?—I don't know, I should not say that, they are intelligent, shrewd men, who would make things square for themselves better than I could do for them.

Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You take a modest view of your own intelligence.

1843. CHAIRMAN.—Have you got any scheme in your own mind as to obtaining the views of the country side as to what class of stallion is most looked for?—No, the only scheme I would suggest is the offering of better prizes for mares; once you do this they say "it is a profitable investment for me to keep my good mare seeing that I will be able to recoup myself by getting a valuable prize from some society."

1844. Your scheme would be on the lines of the present scheme of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes, I would make the prizes more valuable.

1845. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Would you not make the mare show herself with her foal, or in foal again?—I think that the season of the year when mares are examined is not the proper season for this reason, the farmer goes and gets his mare served with a registered sire; he gets a certificate that she has been served; on the production of that his mare is eligible for a prize though that mare may not be in foal. No doubt she has been served; that costs him £1 or £2, and he pockets £5. The owner of the registered sire is bound to give the certificate. I would suggest that the proper time would be when the veterinary surgeon or local intelligence would go to show that the mare was in foal—in the month of March or February.

1846. Mr. WRENCH.—You think there are cases where barren mares have got prizes?—Yes, I am afraid there are.

1847. Or prizes when they are not in foal to the actual horse from which they got the certificate?—I am afraid so; a horse may be let at £1, they offer a £5 prize for the best mare at the Show; that mare may have been served at £1, and the owner actually pockets £4 and keeps another man's mare out which may be in foal.

1848. CHAIRMAN.—Are you aware it is not a hard and fast rule with the Royal Dublin Society?—I understand once the certificates are given by the Local Committee they issue the money. I am aware the Local Committee are empowered to withhold the money for want of merit.

1849. You are aware that under the present scheme money prizes can be given to foals?—I am quite aware of that.

1850. Have you read the rule?—Yes.

1851. You can give all the money to foals under that rule?—No, there is £100 given to our district, for example, the County of Antrim.

1852. To be distributed for what purpose?—For mares, mares with foal at foot, mares two, three, and four years old, and for foals of a thoroughbred horse in the Register of the Royal Dublin Society, 1895 or 1896.

1853. CHAIRMAN (reading).—Premiums shall be confined to mares with foal at foot, &c., is it not left open to the Local Committee to allocate this money even to foals?—Not altogether, I think, from the reading of the scheme, I may be wrong, I understood it was confined to two, three, and four years old, not to extend beyond four years.

1854. In order to get over the doubt of any mare being stinted to a registered stallion was it not open under this scheme for foals to get the prizes in order to get over this very question?—I don't see that would follow.

1855. You said the time of year was not the proper time?—That is for the foal that is there at her foot, but then she has to be served again, she must be served before she is eligible, and I think to get out of that trouble you would want to have your mare shown in March or February.

1856. Mr. WRENCH.—When you can tell she is in foal?—Yes.

Mr. THOMAS MACAFEE examined.

1857. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Union of Ballymoney, County Antrim?—Yes.

1858. You are an Assistant Land Commissioner?—Yes.

1859. Have you any experience of horse-breeding?—I have been breeding, off and on, nearly for the last thirty years.

1860. What stallions have you used and on what sort of mares?—I have bred from thoroughbreds, Clydesdales and Hackneys.

1861. Have you been successful in your horse-breeding?—I have had a fair measure of success, I have bred a few good ones.

1862. What stallions did you say you used?—Thoroughbreds, Clydesdales, and Hackneys.

1863. Which class of horse have you succeeded best

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Mr. Thomas Macafee.

with?—I have only bred two from a Hackney sire, a number from thoroughbreds and a few Clydesdales. I din't breed very many Clydesdales; I had a good mare and put her to thoroughbred sires. I have bred from half-bred mares, and latterly altogether from thoroughbred and Hackney sires.

1864. Which have you been most successful with?—If I have a good stamp of mare I like to breed from the thoroughbred, because if you can breed a good one it is all right, though if you miss it is altogether wrong.

1865. What has been your experience with regard to the Hackneys?—I have sold my colts from thoroughbreds for 50 to 75 guineas at three years old, and I have sold a half-bred Hackney colt at the same money.

1866. Do dealers appreciate horses got by Hackneys, or do they fight shy of them?—Hackneys are not very long introduced into the north of Ireland—five or six years ago, I think; the first Hackney sire I remember was about six years ago. The last witness said he got some stock from him that was not very good. I think that is owing to the fact that he got a good many mares that did not suit him; he was a fine class of horse and he got a class of mares that should not have been sent to him. I considered myself very well paid when I can sell one of his stock at £50, untrained, as a three year old. I don't object to breed more on the same terms; the same horse was subsequently sold at Sewell's for 100 guineas, though in the meantime he met with some slight accident.

1867. Do many farmers breed horses in your neighbourhood?—A good many farmers do.

1868. With what results?—The class of horse they usually breed is the ordinary work horse.

1869. Is the land stiff?—It is largely clay soil; the great tendency with the farmers in my neighbourhood is to breed a horse that is able to work for his meat when he is two years old. They won't take the thoroughbred horses because they are too light to do that; if they happen to breed a weed once or twice they won't run the risk again. They breed a class of horses that will be useful, and that if there is anything wrong with it they can work.

1870. What sort of mare do they use?—Generally speaking a cross between an ordinary mare and a half-bred Clydesdale or Clydesdale horse, mares with plenty of bone, and not too much hair on their legs; the description Mr. Russell gave was very fair.

1871. What do they mate them with?—They mate them with a half-bred horse; that may be a horse with a variety of breeds; if a horse with colour, and fair size and action, and let at a low fee, the tendency is to go to him. My experience of thoroughbreds in the district is that it is hard to get a good one. I may say that I patronise Mr. Russell's horse myself, and I have to send my mare 25 miles to him, and if I want another thoroughbred I must send to Limavady. There is no thoroughbred sire in the district within 20 miles except Mrs. Anderson's, and she may not let to a half-bred mare at all, or charge a fee that farmers would not pay.

1872. Are the stallions of a type that are not required?—A large number are a type that should not be encouraged anywhere. I am pleased to say a great many of them have got little to do this year, and a great many of them are not stallions at the present time.

1873. With regard to the Royal Dublin Society scheme, is that working in your part of the country at the present time?—The Royal Dublin Society scheme so far as registered stallions are concerned, does not work well for me or any farmer in the neighbourhood who wants to patronise a Royal Dublin Society horse, because as I told you we are 20 or 25 miles from any registered sire. Mr. Russell did give us an advantage this year, because he very kindly sent his sire to Ballymoney by train, but for that we would not have had a registered stallion within 25 miles of us.

1874. Can you suggest any way of getting these stallions that would suit you and the farmers in your district?—I don't know. The Royal Dublin Society had a plan a few years ago of sending sires into different districts, but our experience of this class of horse was that anyone who cared for breeding a good class of horse would not send their mares to him. I myself paid a big fee to Mrs. Anderson rather than send to the horse; and the experience of the owners of horses in our locality is that they got so little patronage for thoroughbreds that they gave up keeping them. I hold the opinion very strongly that if the Royal Dublin Society or the Government want to benefit the class of farmers described by Mr. Russell they must adopt a different course. You may send thoroughbreds into a county like mine and the farmers won't patronize them; they are wide-awake enough to know what suits them. So far as tillage and marketing horses are concerned they are no fools as regards what pays best. I think the Royal Dublin Society should register any pure-bred horse—Hackney, thoroughbred, Cleveland, or Clydesdale—so that a farmer may know they are sound. If these horses are let out at a moderate price it will have the effect of crushing out the nondescript sort of horse that an owner will let at any fee he can get.

1875. What class of stallions would your district require?—I have consulted a good many farmers, and they all unanimously say they won't breed from thoroughbreds unless they have a good class of mare, and the only horse they will run the risk with is what will likely get a good strong farm horse or a van horse such as one of the Commissioners described a few minutes ago in his question.

1876. What class of stallion do you suggest?—Our stallion is the Clydesdale, which is largely patronized; he gets a good class of farm horse. The Hackney with style and action, I think, would be patronized.

1877. You have heard of the horses called the half-bred sires—would that kind of horse suit?—Yes; if he has strength and action he would take very well. I have known one or two horses of that class to get very good support.

1878. Are there any standing in your district?—Very few of that stamp got by a thoroughbred. Mrs. Anderson has a good class of horse got by a thoroughbred out of a half-bred mare. There is a great tendency to keep a horse got by a Clydesdale or a Cleveland horse, or something of that stamp.

1879. Mr. La Touche.—You said that you bred from thoroughbred sires and Hackney sires, but you apparently only bred two Hackneys?—Yes.

1880. You only sent two mares to a Hackney?—I generally keep two brood mares.

1881. And those are the mares that you have been in the habit of sending to thoroughbred sires, you sent them to Hackney horses?—No, I did not, I sent a mare about half-bred or three-quarters-bred that I was driving myself. I sent her to a Hackney simply because I thought she had not size enough about her for a thoroughbred horse. I am a strong believer for successful breeding in watching carefully the class of mare you mate with a certain class of horse. I thought this mare was too small for a thoroughbred and I sent her to a Hackney with very good results. I sold the mare afterwards, and that was the only reason I did not continue to breed from Hackneys. If I had the same mare still I would continue to send her to Hackneys so long as I found it suited her.

1882. What is the ordinary style of mare in that country, a big mare?—No, a medium class mare.

1883. Bigger than this mare you describe?—Oh yes, stronger with more of the crosses of the Clydesdale.

1884. The ordinary mare of the country is bigger and stronger?—Yes, taking them generally.

1885. You said the farmers had sent a number of unsuitable mares to the Hackney sire "Excelsior"?—Yes, that is the horse.

1896. What in your opinion constitutes an unsuitable mare for a Hackney sire?—A big rough half-bred Clydesdale mare, she is not the sort of mare to send to a Hackney sire.

1887. What sort of horse would you send her to?—If she was a strong half-bred Clydesdale mare with good shapes and plenty of action, I would send her to a thoroughbred horse or to a horse with two or three stains in him, if I could get a good one.

1888. You don't think an animal bred that way would be suitable for a Hackney sire?—I don't think a half-bred Clydesdale is the sort to send to a Hackney at all; I think if you have a good sharp, tight little mare with clean bones and a good dash of breeding in her, or if you have a very light thoroughbred mare, she would suit a Hackney as well as any if the action is right.

1889. You say there is a great dearth of thoroughbred stallions up in your country so that you send your mare twenty-five miles?—Yes, and that dearth altogether arises for want of patronage.

1890. There were thoroughbred horses at one time there?—When I remember twenty-five or thirty years ago we had no difficulty in getting two or three thoroughbred horses in the district.

1891. What sort of horses were they?—They were horses in the Stud book.

1892. I mean were they good horses?—Fairly good.

1893. What sort of fees did they cover at?—Generally from £2 to £2 10*s.* at that time.

1894. Have you any idea what the owners of these sires gave for them?—I have not any idea.

1895. Is the fee of the ordinary stallion in the country now less than that?—There are some, I suppose, that if you had a half-sovereign in your pocket the fellow would serve your mare for it rather than let you go to his neighbour standing in the next box, I don't think very much of the type of horse that would be let at that I may say.

1896. Do you think good strong thoroughbred horses have ever been within the reach of the farmers in your district?—No, I think the very good thoroughbred horses are hardly within the reach of the small farmer, that is the farmer with from twenty-five to forty acres of land, I think that as things go that farmer thinks twice before he will pay two or three sovereigns for the service of a horse, but leaving the question of fee aside the farmers seem to have a feeling that it is a rather risky thing breeding off a thoroughbred horse.

1897. Do you think that feeling may have arisen in consequence of the inferiority of the thoroughbred horses within their reach?—I think it has arisen more from practical experience, breeding off a thoroughbred horse and finding that they had a thing that did not take in the market when they went to sell it. I think the worst thing a man could have is a weedy thoroughbred horse that when he goes to the fair and you begin to show him round he is tied at the knees dashing his feet about. I think two or three experiences of that is enough to prevent a small farmer continuing that breeding.

1898. I conclude that the thoroughbred horses they did breed from were weedy?—I did not say that at all.

1899. You spoke of weedy thoroughbred horses, are there any weedy horses of any other sort?—Certainly, there are weeds in all breeds, but I think the worst breed of all is a weed that is from a thoroughbred.

1900. I should think the fact of his being a thoroughbred was something in his favour at all events?—My experience of sales that I have been watching of thoroughbreds and ones that were very near thoroughbred have been very nearly the opposite. You can sell a weed of any other breed except a thoroughbred, you can sell a horse that is not up to the mark if he has strength, because you will get a man that will buy him to cart or to plough.

1901. You said just now that some of these stallions had less to do than they had formerly, do you mean the farmers are not breeding horses as much?—I think they are breeding quite as many.

1902. Then they are getting more particular about the sires they are sending to?—No, but the tendency has been growing in a purely tillage country to breed a class of horse that is able to work for his meat from he is two years old.

1903. But I see that in speaking about thoroughbred horses you said there were a number of stallions of every sort and breed, nondescript stallions and every description of stallion in the country, and you were glad to say a great many of them were not doing as much as they did?—I heard that the tendency this year was to breed less, that that class of horse was not getting so much support, and I think that is largely owing to the fact that horses have not been selling so well, especially young horses.

1904. You think they are not breeding so much?—I don't think this year there have been so many mares served of the ordinary type, I think men who have good mares and good horses are breeding as many as ever they did, but I think the small class of farmers with a poor mare going to these poor sires have not been doing so much this year from any information I have been able to gather from the men who keep them, and I know one or two veterinary surgeons told me they have put a good many of that class of horse from breeding this year, within the last two or three months, so it would be more or less a sign that they did not get the support they did formerly.

1905. Col. St. Quintin.—You heard I asked a question, and you noted it apparently, of Mr. Russell, putting the thoroughbred horse on one side, apparently the small farmer breeds with two objects, either to sell or to use?—Yes.

1906. Suppose that, as you say, he breeds to sell, he may have an animal on his hands that he cannot sell, and therefore he likes breeding an animal that may be useful to him if he cannot get rid of it in the market?—Certainly, that is the one great object he has in view.

1907. Then putting the thoroughbred horse on one side, what the small farmer wants for his own use, as I gather, with this light soil, is not a very heavy weighty horse, but a horse that can work the soil and take him into the fairs, a smallish, fairly strong, useful horse?—Yes, I said at first in answer to a question that my district of the country is largely heavy soil.

1908. Then you like the big heavy horse?—Yes.

1909. Can you say do you grow the big weighty horse there at all?—Oh, yes; there is no horse gets more support than a good Clydesdale. I know two or three Clydesdale horses, and they do more in my immediate neighbourhood of country than any horses that stand in the fair or market. I know one horse, and I have a foal off him this year myself, and I have known that horse serve up to close on 200 mares in the season.

1910. And they get you a class of horse that is useful throughout the district for the actual farming work of the smaller farmers?—Yes.

1911. Do you think that the Hackney horse which is a lighter horse than him, and a horse with more action, will get the same useful class of horses as the other?—No, but I think that a farmer who has a suitable mare and goes to a Hackney horse will get a horse that is able to work for his meat from two years old to four years old, and then he has a chance of having a horse that he can take to a fair that will attract the attention of buyers, and he will get a fair price for him.

1912. There is a great deal talked about the action of a horse, and everybody likes to see action to a certain extent, but is the Hackney action a useful action for small farmer's horse to do his work, supposing he cannot sell him?—Yes, but you must bear in mind that there are very few farmers in the

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North of Ireland that have pure bred Hackney mares.

1913. I know, but the cross?—I am coming to that. An ordinary farm mare may have action but not of the class of Hackney action, and if you put a Hackney sire on that class of mare you get the medium action between the two, which is a taking thing at a fair.

1914. I was trying to arrive at the utility to the farmer if anything happens to the produce?—If you give the class of mare I am speaking of to the Hackney horse I don't think you have too much action for anything. If you take a pure mare to a pure bred Hackney horse you have too much action for a farmer, but that is only to be obtained from a Hackney mare which is bred for flash action.

1915. Then you would not get too much action from the ordinary mare of the country with a Hackney horse?—I don't think you would, and my experience of selling horses in fairs is that a man who had a horse with straight action was generally the man who was called aside at first and asked what he wanted for it.

1916. There is straight action, and there is this extraordinary knee action, two different things altogether, if a horse goes straight he goes straight or crooked, that is a different class of action?—I don't think you have very many men with mares, either in the North of Ireland or any district like it, that you will breed action of that very high class from, I think that can only be bred by following the action on both sides, the sire and dam.

1917. There is very little cart work necessary there?—There is all the work necessary on a farm.

1918. But I mean the driving class?—There is no farmer with 25 acres and upwards that does not like to have a harness horse.

1919. Quite so, we all like that, but do they drive much there in light vehicles on the road?—Certainly, they all have some sort of trap to drive to market or to church. I don't know any farmer of 20 acres or more that has not his car or his trap of some description to drive himself and his family about.

1920. He does not keep the horse specially for that, he keeps it for general utility?—He tries to breed a horse that will farm and do that too.

1921. Mr. WRENCH.—Then you hold that it is necessary to have specially good action in the sire to get animals with saleable action out of the ordinary mares of the country?—Certainly I do, I think that is one of the first requisites that any man going to select a sire from a number of horses will look to, one of the first things that is shown to him.

1922. And do you think that if a thoroughbred happens to have a specially good action that he is as likely to transmit it as a Hackney, a horse that has been bred for generations for action? Which do you think will transmit it best?—My opinion is you may get a thoroughbred horse that has particularly good action in himself alone, and yet if you go back a generation or two there may be nothing extraordinary in the action, and I think it is questionable whether that will be brought into the stock or not. But take the Hackney horse it has been stamped into him for generations, and you are almost sure to have it.

1923. Is it not a fact that it is a drawback to the thoroughbred to have high action or the power of getting it?—I would not like a thoroughbred horse with Hackney action.

1924. Is not a thoroughbred horse bred for speed as a rule?—Yes.

1925. You said you have bred a few good horses, can you give us particulars of any horses you bred, what they sold for?—No man in Ireland, I may say, likes better to breed a good hunter than I do, notwithstanding that I have bred Hackneys that have been successful, and I have sold several colts to a gentleman who does a great deal in hunters and is present here today, at from £50 to £75. I sold him one half-bred colt at £75 that he sold twelve months afterwards for £300, and he introduced me to a gentleman in the Shelbourne Hotel here that sold him three years afterwards for £500.

1926. Then you do occasionally breed good horses in the North of Ireland?—Yes, we try to breed good ones. And a friend of mine sold two horses, one of them this year at the Royal Dublin Society's Show took first prize in the 15st. 7 class, and he sold a half-sister that was brought here and took second prize in the 13st. 7 class. We are very fond of breeding good horses, the only thing is that we have not the soil that they have in other parts of Ireland. If we had the soil of Meath, and Kildare, and King's Co. and Queen's Co., we would be just as anxious to breed from thoroughbreds and to breed hunters as gentlemen living in those districts.

1927. And is horse-breeding a considerable industry in your part of the North of Ireland?—Yes, it is.

1928. And all over Ulster?—All over Ulster.

1929. Do you agree with Mr. Russell that a very large number of the horses are bred by men who hold from 20 to 30 acres?—Yes, well, I would give it a wider limit than Mr. Russell, I would say from 20 to 50 acres.

1930. You think the larger proportion of horses is bred by men holding under 50 acres?—Yes, a good proportion.

1931. Do you think that these men are qualified to form an opinion for themselves as to what they want?—I have not the slightest doubt about that.

1932. And you think they ought to be consulted if there was any public grant in aid of horse-breeding, you think there ought to be some way of taking the opinion of these people?—I do.

1933. Have you thought at all in what way you would take it?—I think there are two ways you could take it, by having a plebiscite of all the farmers of from 20 to 60 acres, through the Constabulary. Or you could take it in a way that I think would just test the matter as well as any other way what was the opinion of the farmers. If the Royal Dublin Society would send a thoroughbred horse down into the district or town, and let him stand there, and take a Hackney horse with a fair quality of action, and let him stand in the same town, you would very soon find which of the two the farmers would patronise, let them both stand at the one fee. I saw half a dozen horses yesterday, and I don't care which one you would send down, if you sent a thoroughbred horse with him, I will venture to say that the one horse would get four or five mares to the one the thoroughbred would get in the district I come from.

1934. Somebody asked about the mares in your district, do you know anything about what has been termed by some people "the old Irish mare," does she exist in Ballymoney or that district?—I don't know what you would call an old Irish mare. If it is a question of going back for a generation or two to find what they were or how they were bred, I cannot define it, but I saw in the evidence given here a definition given by a witness with regard to what constituted an old Irish mare, and all I know is it would not be very hard to pick up plenty of mares or horses in the North of Ireland that would come up to that qualification at any rate.

1935. I forget what qualification that was?—A mare that would carry a turf creel eight miles, and trot back at the rate of five or six miles an hour, and do it every day for months.

1936. You think there are plenty of those mares to be found?—I do.

1937. And do you think any of the people that have those mares have any record as to their breeding?—I don't think it, they don't pay any attention to it.

1938. Are there not farmers in your district that have kept special mares or a special breed in their families for years?—There may be individual families

that have a special breed that they take a pride in, and still retain a brood mare of that breed; I have, no doubt, there are cases of that kind, but I don't know them. If one has a mare that has bred very well, and they have succeeded well with the stock there is always a feeling or a tendency to keep one of the breed, in fact I have a mare at the present moment that is suckling her eleventh foal, and I would not like to part with the breed.

1939. Do you know how that mare is bred back?—It is a mare I bought from the South of Ireland.

1940. Do you think that a strong upstanding Hackney horse would produce stock strong enough to work on the farms in your district?—I do.

1941. What becomes of the horses chiefly, where are those sold that are bred in your district?—Well, when a horse comes to four or five years of age, and that he shows a bit of quality and action, and is likely to make a fair harness horse, he is generally fed by the farmers and taken to the Moy Fair, which is the great market for horses in our country, it is held once a month. And then we have a very good fair at Ballyclare in the month of May, and we have a fairly good monthly fair in Ballymena. The better class of horses are sold in those fairs, and the ordinary horses that change hands from farmer to farmer are sold in the local fairs.

1942. Then most of the horses that are bred there are not sold until they are four-year-olds?—Well, they change hands among the farmers.

1943. They don't leave the locality?—They don't leave the locality very much. I noticed in the evidence of a witness with regard to Ulster and what became of the horses, a remark that I as an Ulster man don't agree with, and that is, that a large proportion of sales take place under a year old in Ulster, I don't agree with that at all, that is that the large proportion of horses bred in Ulster are sold while they are foals.

1944. You don't think that is so?—I don't think it. There are very few horses in my opinion sold in Ulster to go into any of the other provinces at all, the great tendency is to buy horses in the other provinces and bring them to Ulster.

1945. A good many horses are bought in the South and fed in Ulster?—A great many.

1946. Are many horses bred in Ulster, do you think, of the class that are purchased by Messrs. East and Wimbush, and those big London dealers, carriage horses of sixteen hands and over?—I know two men in particular that Mr. East buys horses from, and I think very few of them are bred in Ulster; I think they are nearly all bred outside of Ulster.

1947. You refer to two dealers now?—I refer to two farmers that feed horses.

1948. And you think they buy them in the South of Ireland?—They do. I met one of them in Belfast when I was coming here, well, before I was coming here, about the beginning of last week I met him in Belfast, and asked him where he was going, and he said he was going to Mullingar Fair, and I know that that man does not sell horses to any man but East.

1949. Do you think it is because the soil and climate in Ulster will not produce as big horses as the South of Ireland?—Yes, it is, we have not the climate, and we have not the soil, and we have not the limestone. If we want to breed a good half-bred colt we have to give him extra feeding and extra kindness to make up for the deficiency in the soil with regard to the limestone, and those other qualities that are calculated to grow size and bone.

1950. Have you any experience or did you see any difference in the hardness of animals bred from Hackneys and those bred from thoroughbreds?—No, I have not had much experience beyond my own, but I did not see anything in them that would lead me to believe that they were soft in any way. I have a half-bred Hackney at the present time that I intend to train and use myself, and I sold a half-bred Hackney as I told you that left the district, and I did not see any tendency to softness in either, but rather the reverse, he was a horse with rather much pluck when we began to handle him, that is the one I sold.

1951. You think there used to be a good many thoroughbred horses twenty or thirty years ago but they were given up. Do you know the reasons?—The owners dropped keeping them simply because they did not get patronage.

1952. And I think you said you had been watching the sales of thoroughbred horses lately. Have there been any sales of thoroughbred horses in your district?—I remarked a sale of thoroughbred horses from my district at Mr. Robson's sale yard in Belfast some time ago, but I understood from the report that the prices they brought were very bad, very indifferent prices.

1953. What do you call very indifferent?—I would not like to put a name on any of the prices at the present moment. If I might give an opinion with regard to the distribution of the Royal Dublin Society's money at the exhibitions of mares I would rather go against the present principle. Take the County Antrim for instance, I think it is hardly fair that the whole £100 for the county should be given to be distributed at one centre, because if a farmer qualifies by sending his mare to such sires as Mr. Russell's, he does not like to take the trouble of sending his mare and foal 25 miles to exhibit for the prize, and I think that if the Royal Dublin Society would encourage the breeding of that class of foals by giving a little money to the local shows, where they have a local show, to be given in prizes either for mares, or for foals, or for yearlings, it would be a great help to the Agricultural Society, and would give the farmers in that particular neighbourhood a chance of exhibiting there.

1954. That is where a local show exists?—Where a local show exists. Take for instance, Coleraine, we have a local show there that has been in existence for very many years, and if a little help was given by the Royal Dublin Society to our horse classes for foals and mares served by a registered stallion, and for foals got by a registered sire, and for yearlings got by a registered sire, it would be a very great help to the show. I speak as a member of committee of the show that it would be a very great help to us, and it would encourage the farmers in that locality to support a registered sire. At the present time they have a show for mares and foals in Coleraine, which is within five miles of me, but if I want to show my mare and foal I must put her on the rail and send her 25 miles to get to the County Antrim show, whereas if a little money was taken from the £100 given to Antrim, and a little from the £100 given to Derry, and given to the Coleraine Farming Society for that particular class of horses it would be a very great help to our society and help to encourage the breeding of mares and foals. The Royal Dublin Society give us at the present time money in the same way for the encouragement of the breeding of shorthorns, we get a certain amount of money from them each year which is distributed over the shorthorn classes, and if they could see their way to help us in the same way for the breeding of horses it would aid us very much.

1955. Do you think more interest is being taken in societies now and in shows?—Oh, yes, the only great difficulty we have to contend with is that it is very hard to get subscriptions to keep the society up, but if we had a little help it would make up for that, and if the help was given to the particular class of horses it would encourage them very much. I may say that our local show has been very largely aided within the last few years by a few gentlemen, who, through a public spirit, have given special prizes for a certain class of horses, the Route Hunt for instance gives us a cup every year, open to farmers over whose

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land they hunt, and Mr. Taylor, of Coleraine, gives two special prizes for the best harness horses in the show. If we could get those things supplemented, for the result of their giving these prizes has been to double or treble the number of horses of the particular classes shown. It is hardly fair lines to ask us to send from one end of the county to the other to compete for those Government prizes at present, it is rather against the Ballymena gentlemen who are present to say this, but I think it is only fair it should be distributed a little more over the county.

1956. CHAIRMAN.—You used a curious expression as regards certain farmers in Ulster, you said they fed horses, I presume you mean they buy them, and take them down there and then sell them again?—Yes. The plan on which they work is, in some particular districts they go down to the fairs in the South or Midland Counties, and they buy raw colts, and bring them up and feed them in the very same way as I would feed twenty or thirty bullocks.

1957. They do that with an eye to selling purposes; where do they sell chiefly?—The great bulk of those horses are sold to some particular Englishman who comes over. I mentioned the fact that two men that I know intimately sold all their horses to East, they would not sell a horse to you or any other gentleman until East had first taken his horses out of them, all that suited him; then there are other men who feed them, and sell the great bulk of their horses in Moy.

1958. Where do those horses go?—To England, and France, and Scotland.

1959. They don't travel south here?— Oh, I don't think it.

1960. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I was going to ask the same question. The bulk of those horses, as far as I gather, are bought by the farmers and fed in that way?—Yes, they are.

1961. There are a great many bought by small dealers in Belfast and all round there, kept during the winter, and those chiefly find their way into the Moy, or from the Belfast dealers across the water from Belfast?—They do.

1962. And they go, the greater bulk of them, to the foreign governments as remounts?—Yes, it is a great practice. We have a lot of men who act as dealers, and go down to the fairs in the South and Midland Counties, and bring up the horses as raw colts, and sell them in the local fairs to farmers who buy one, two, or three horses, and feed them, and then they sell them as you describe in the Moy Fair or to Belfast dealers, and they all leave the country.

1963. They never come down here again?—I don't think one in a thousand horses sold in Ulster ever comes back to any other province. There was just one remark I wanted to make with regard to the exhibition of mares and foals, according to the arrangement at present you have only one class, that is up to £150 valuation.

1964. CHAIRMAN.—Who have only one class?—They can only exhibit up to £150 under the Royal Dublin Society for mares and foals. I think it would be a great improvement if you would cut the class in two, and make a class that would suit smaller farmers, and then a class without any limit that would suit the larger farmers, because, as it stands at present, those men you have heard so much evidence about, holders of twenty or thirty or forty acres have to compete against large farmers who can afford to buy a very much better mare and feed the produce better. I was present at the last show of mares and foals at Ballymena, and I thought the small farmers there were more or less shut out, though they had quite as good a right to win the money as the big farmers.

1965. Mr. WRENCH.—What division would you make?—Up to £60 or £75. I would give a small class up to a moderate sum that would give the small farmer a chance of competing and getting a share of the money, and then I would make an open class of all the others.

NATHANIEL MORTON examined.

Mr. Nathaniel Morton.

1966. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Brookville, Ballymena, County Antrim?—Yes.

1967. Will you describe the district in which you reside, the nature of the country, the soil?—Well, the soil for the most part in the neighbourhood is of a light nature, and the district all round about is peopled by small farmers, small in comparison with the farmers in other parts of Ireland and England, but they are a very hard-working and very intelligent set of people, and they are nearly all well-doing, and all in good circumstances.

1968. Do you consider it adapted to the breeding of horses?—Well, whether it is naturally adapted or not I don't know whether I am qualified to say, but the fact remains that a great many are bred there, and even bred by some farmers who occupy very small holdings, and what they cannot do for their colts and young stock in grazing they supplement with other feeding.

1969. You have been a successful exhibitor at the Royal Dublin Society's Shows?—I think I may claim to have been fairly successful, I won the jumping championship of the Show three times, I don't think anyone ever did that before. I also won the champion Stone Wall Jumping event often and often, and in large classes with 60 or 70 horses competing I have had the good fortune to get first and second on more than one occasion.

1970. A great many horses pass through your hands annually?—Yes, I am very fond of passing them on.

1971. What class of horses do you refer to?—I like most of all, and above all, and beyond all, a good blood hunter.

1972. Where do you procure them chiefly?—Well, I have got some of them in the North of Ireland, I have bred some of them myself, but I get a great many from the South and West of Ireland. I don't know whether I am right in saying West, I am not very clear in my geography, but from such places as Cahirmee, Cork, Bartlemy, Ballinasloe, and Mullingar, and all the fairs of note.

1973. Now with regard to the mares in your district, are they a good class of mares, are they as good as formerly or are they going back?—In my opinion there is no such thing as a typical mare, I mean to say there is no type, they are of all sorts and conditions, and they breed from every sort of thing there is, that is much to be regretted but it is so, they will breed from great leggy brutes that should be slaughtered, and they will breed from little common ones, and they will breed from all sorts, but among them they have a great many good mares. If a good hunting mare comes from the South of Ireland, or any part of Ireland, and any accident happens to her she passes into the hands of a small farmer, and he at once proceeds to breed from her.

1974. Are the stallions you have sufficient in number, and are they of the right stamp for your part of the country?—I think much good could be done for breeding if we had still more stallions spread over the country and put within the reach of small farmers at small fees.

1975. I mean to say it would not pay private owners to procure good enough stallions and put them at the disposal of these people at fees that these people would give or could give?—I think the Government could help them very much by scattering good stallions over the country at low fees.

1976. What class of stallion, what breeds?—I don't know. I think if you take two or three descriptions of stallions and put the best examples of their own breeds within reach of the people that you might fairly trust them to find out what were the best to breed from, and what were the most paying ones to breed from. I would not mind if there was a Cleveland Bay, a Yorkshire coaching horse, a very good Hackney, and a very good blood one, all in my own neighbourhood; I think the people can find out for themselves the ones that it would pay them to breed from, and I hold that no matter how a stallion is bred you can tell nothing about him until you see his stock. I heard a gentleman at the beginning of this inquiry say he would advocate, if I understood him aright, the withholding of the registration of stallions until the horse had proved himself. I think he was speaking of stallions with a stain, whose produce there might be some doubt about, but I would go further than that and say that should apply to thoroughbreds, and I will tell you why. I have known many thoroughbreds faultlessly bred, and fashionably bred, and yet as a matter of fact no matter what mare was put to them they only produced a wretched weed. I have known other stallions with perhaps no great things to be expected from them thoroughbred, and yet everything the got seemed a good thing.

1977. Your remarks, I suppose, refer to half-bred mares put to the stallions you are speaking of?—Well, you see so very few breed thoroughbred that it may be taken as referring more to half-bred mares. Will you pardon me referring to this. Mr. Russell in his evidence to-day said he had, a couple or three years ago, I forget which, a very handsome thoroughbred stallion, I think he was a Government registered one or a Royal Dublin Society registered one. He was a particularly well-bred horse and he was very much fancied. Well, he has gone now and I don't think Mr. Russell will blame me for saying so, everything he got was small. As a matter of fact it would have been a great harm to Mr. Russell if he had kept him. Quite the contrary applies to the present horse he has got now, yet if you had taken their pedigree and soundness you would have chosen one just as fast as the other, and that is why I say if it were possible to do so, I would defer the registration of the stallion until he had proved what stock he had got or was likely to get.

1978. Have you had any experience with regard to the breeding of Hackneys?—Yes.

1979. How in your opinion will the introduction of Hackneys affect the trade in Irish hunters?—Well, I don't think there is any cause for the alarm that is so generally expressed at all. I don't think there is the slightest. I have heard it said that mares bred from Hackney horses in the congested districts will permeate the hunter-breeding districts and do a great deal of harm. I don't know why they should do so any more than the mares that were bred there before the introduction of Hackneys, and they were acknowledged not to be good ones.

1980. Have you any suggestions to make with a view of helping farmers to breed horses, any scheme?—I really cannot say that I have formulated any scheme or thought that matter out sufficiently. I took it that there were wiser heads than mine engaged at that work, and that they would find out something very good and very useful as a result of their inquiries. I think, generally speaking, that it would be a good thing to try to establish more local shows and give prizes for breeding, and try to encourage farmers who had really very good and approved mares to keep them long. Mr. Macafee suggested that if there were some money given to the Coleraine Show it would be an advantage. I have no doubt it would. I think if there were some money offered for instance in Ballymena, a certain sum would be found by the people in the district, and probably a very nice little show could be got up there, and I think that an increase of shows throughout the country would eventuate in good to horse-breeding generally, it would bring people together and let them exchange ideas and allow them to see the results, and where they had made a mistake they would have sense enough not to repeat it.

1981. Are there as many horses bred in your district as formerly?—I think there are a very great number bred in my district.

1982. More or less than formerly?—I think there are quite as many now as ever there were. I think the people are trying to breed now from better horses because they find that moderate or low priced horses won't pay them.

1983. Is the soil in your district adapted for rearing good stock?—I think we have some very good soil in the district, in parts of Ulster, in my own district there is some very good grazing, just as good as in other counties; there is none of that old pasture for which Meath and some other counties are famous, but there is very good grazing that can grow large stock.

1984. Any limestone?—There must be limestone in the district, and down towards the coast there is a great deal of limestone; there is plenty of old grazing in the neighbourhood of Larne and Carncastle, which is 16 miles from Ballymena; it is really over lime quarries; lots of it.

1985. There was a question, which has been asked and answered, about half-bred sires, have you any experience in half-bred sires?—Yes. I can instance one horse, he probably was located nearer Mr. Macafee's residence than mine, but he was known in our neighbourhood as Ferguson's "Blood Royal," unfortunately that horse was wrong in his wind, and, still more unfortunately, a certain percentage of his stock were wrong in their wind, but I can say that the ones of his stock that were sound were in my opinion priceless; they were worth their weight in gold; better hunters never were bred in any corner of the habitable globe, and, as a matter of fact, I won one of the championships in the Dublin Show with a four-year old got by him, beating all ages and winners there.

1986. What breeding was he?—He was by the real "Blood Royal," a horse by "The Marquis," a horse, if I remember him right, with rather a Roman nose and not the best back, and he was out of a mare by "Tariff," and as I understand he was not a clean bred horse, but I know that it was quite a bye-word in our country that anything got by "Tariff" had unlimited endurance, the dam of this "Blood Royal" I speak of was got by that "Tariff."

1987. You don't know what stains were in the dam?—I do not, I could not particularise the stains, I daresay it would be possible to ascertain them, but the man who bred and owned him is dead, and whether it could be ascertained reliably or not I am afraid to say. Do you happen to know a horse called "Victorious?"

Captain *Tuthill.*—The Chairman is the owner.

Witness.—Then is there one "Victorious"?

Captain *Tuthill.*—He is dead, he was not clean bred.

Witness.—I am afraid I refer to "Victorious," could you tell the owner?

Captain *Tuthill.*—I don't know, he was a Limerick bred horse.

Witness.—I had a colt by Victorious and I sold him to a dealer for a price that I rarely hear of for a four-year-old, £250, and I heard he gave the greatest satisfaction.

Mr. LaTouche.—There was a Victorious that belonged to Gavagan.

Witness.—I am speaking of the Victorious by Victor, if I heard the owner's name I would remember it because I got into a correspondence with him about sending two hunter mares of my own to him.

1988. The Chairman.—In former evidence given it was stated that half-bred stallions under certain

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restrictions would be desirable animals to have in the country, are you of the same opinion?—As a matter of fact I did not see particularly the former evidence given, because I have been from home, I have only just returned from England and was not giving the matter much attention, but I would be of opinion that if you were sure they got good ones they ought to be accepted, but I would be far more particular about what they got than whether they had so many or so few crosses of blood. For instance, I don't know how many crosses old "Blood Royal" had but I would dare to buy every four-year old by him that I could find that would pass sound in its wind.

1989. Mr. LaTouche.—You say that you consider very small fees would have a great effect upon the farmers?—That is quite true.

1990. And it would not pay a man to buy good thoroughbred horses and let them out to the farmers at the fees that a farmer would be prepared to pay?—I question very much if it would, it may in this way, if there was only one within a biggish radius that one might get sufficient at remunerative prices, but if there were sufficient for the district, and to knock out the bad blood ones then the fees would have to be so low that it would not pay any private individual.

1991. You would not expect to get a useful thoroughbred sire for less than £200 or £300?—I have seen thoroughbreds sold at all sorts of prices.

1992. Do you keep a horse yourself?—A stallion, I have had more than one thoroughbred horse. I have a couple of Hackney stallions at present, I have a Shire stallion and I have a pony stallion.

1993. Have you got any thoroughbred stallions at present?—I have not, and I will tell you why. The last one I had was a Royal Dublin Society's registered one as a matter of fact, and it is a matter I can prove he got as good stock I think as any thoroughbred in the North of Ireland, some of which I have this moment as young ones and hope to show. I offered the service of that horse on various occasions free to farmers round about me to see what he would breed and they declined.

1994. Was he a good foal getter?—I am telling you I am prepared to show his stock against that of any thoroughbred horse, his last year's foals, year olds, and two year olds. Well, my best Hackney horse's fee is five guineas, and I get as many mares as I want for him.

1995. Then, as a matter of fact, it was no fault of the horse that the farmers would not send their stock there?—I would like to show all his stock I know of against the same number picked from any other horse's stock.

1996. Do you think his stock are as valuable or more valuable or less valuable than the stock of your Hackney stallions?—I really could not say, you cannot compare two opposites. I could hardly tell you; in their own way I like them as well as I could like anything, and I hope to have bred some good Hackneys too.

1997. You can compare this way by showing which will fetch the biggest prices?—I have certainly been offered (though I have not sold) more for a Hackney than I could realise for a hunter.

1998. This thoroughbred horse that you say you could not induce the farmers to send their mares to had got as good stock as any other thoroughbred horse in the north of Ireland?—I stick to that.

1999. But you would not contend his stock were as good as stock got by a Hackney horse?—They are better than a large majority of Hackney stock. It is only an exceptional Hackney horse that I am speaking of.

2000. You say that it is only the stock of an exceptional Hackney that would be more valuable than the stock of this thoroughbred horse?—I mean by that a Hackney with very good legs and perhaps extravagant action, that is perhaps worth a sentimental price for a special purpose.

2001. What I want to get at is you said you could not induce a farmer to send his mare to this horse of yours, while at the same time you say his stock are so good?—I will tell you what I think would perhaps explain it now that we come to discuss it. At the time I offered his services he was more or less an untried horse and none of us knew. I did not know myself that his stock would be as good as they turned out. I think that is the genuine explanation of the matter.

2002. What did you do with him?—I castrated him and gave him away.

2003. You keep your Hackney stallions, you have not given them away yet?—No, I want £2,000 for one of them.

2004. Have you been breeding from them for any length of time?—I have been breeding a good many kind of horses for a great many years.

2005. No, but these Hackney stallions, have you been breeding from them for any length of time?—I don't know; I think only some two or three years, about three years.

2006. Have you sold any of their produce?—I don't think I have ever offered any of them.

2007. You did not send any over to York?—Oh, no, never dreamt of doing so, that is separate and distinct entirely, that is a question of hunters.

2008. In answer to Lord Rathdonnel you said that you did not think that the Hackney crossing with the mares of the congested districts was likely to have any injurious effect upon the hunter breeding in the south of Ireland, did you not say something to that effect?—I did; I would think it a very queer thing for a man who bred high-class hunters to go into what is acknowledged a bad district to obtain mares and bring mares from that to breed high-class hunters out of, I cannot imagine why they should do such a thing.

2009. You don't think that in the North of Ireland it would have any effect because there is very little export from the North of Ireland to the South of Ireland?—Oh, there is no export from the North of Ireland to the South, none whatever, because the North of Ireland men can find a market for themselves, and if the South of Ireland men bought them it certainly would not be for their own use, they would be looking for a market for themselves.

2010. Do you think this Hackney strain is a good hardy strain to introduce?—I think some Hackneys are as good and game animals as are living and can stay as long as blood ones.

2011. Speaking generally of the blood is it a good harness blood?—I think there is a great deal of rubbish among the Hackneys and in the Hackney Stud Book, and I think the same remark applies to the thoroughbreds and any other breed you can think of, but there are Hackneys as good and as game animals as ever trod, who will stay while they can live, while breath is in them.

2012. Have you a horse show at Ballymena?—We have a jumping competition every year.

2013. Driving?—Yes.

2014. Have you got a track there?—We have.

2015. Is it a new one?—Exactly similar to Dublin.

2016. Same size?—Same size, our engineer came to Dublin and got his measurements and everything here.

2017. How long has it been made?—Well, it is just finished.

2018. Did you take an active part in the preparation of this horse track?—I did.

2019. Did you express any opinion about its size?—I never think it desirable to have a show yard and harness track too long, too big a one, and I will tell you why, if you are looking at horses and their movements and you want to see their action you don't want them to go to a distance and out of the range of vision.

2020. Don't you think you can see a horse's action better on a long straight piece than when he is always on the turn?—I think you can see a horse well enough on one the size of Dublin and you can see one well on a track less than Dublin. I know when I went to judge at Newtownards where they had unlimited space they went out of the range of my vision, we had to bring them into a smaller circle, it does not mean that you must keep them going for a less time but they are more under the command of your eye, you see them all the time.

2021. If they are nearer you a smaller number of circuits would give you the same opportunity of seeing them as a larger number of circuits?—That is so.

2022. Did you express an opinion on the laying out of this track that the circuit was so large that horses got by Hackneys could not go round twice?—I did not, I know what you refer to, but it is a mere perversion of what I said.

2023. There was a witness here sometime ago told us he could buy four year olds in England at forty per cent. cheaper than he could over here, and if he was a dishonest man he could buy horses in England and bring them over here and sell them at forty per cent. profit?—I am sure he was not dishonest, that gentleman, he would do no such thing.

2024. No, of course, but do you agree with him?—I really don't know, I hardly ever saw a colt in England worth buying, and I have had the luck to have had several of them myself, and I always wished I had cut their throats on the other side and left them there.

2025. Do you think the Irish horse owes any of his prestige to the fact of his being almost invariably got by a thoroughbred horse and that his dam was got by a thoroughbred horse?—But I don't think its dam is always got by a thoroughbred horse, and I don't know where the proof is that it is.

2026. There is no proof of course, but don't you think or do you think that an English dealer is prepared to give a better price for an Irish horse than he would for a horse bred in his own country from the belief, at any rate, that the animal he is buying in Ireland is got by a thoroughbred horse and is out of a mare got by a thoroughbred horse?—I think the fact remains, and I am proud of it, that Irish horses sell better than English horses and that English dealers will come and buy them and be very glad to do so in Ireland when they get the opportunity.

2027. Do you think they would give the same price for high-class Irish hunters if they had reason to believe that this Hackney blood was disseminated among them at all?—That is a question I could not answer, I think the English dealers will buy what they like when they see it and they don't ask particularly how it is bred.

2028. Do you go down to the South of Ireland to buy horses?—Very seldom.

2029. Cahirmee and Cork?—I have been there, but that is all, I have no time to go to fairs.

2030. You are aware that although these horses don't come out of the province of Ulster into the southern and eastern provinces of Ireland horses do come out of the congested districts in the West of Ireland and come eastward into Leinster and East Munster?—I don't know anything about what happens there, I don't know anything about them whatever, I am not qualified to give an opinion, I have never seen them.

2031. You did give an opinion just now, you said you did not think that the crossing of the congested districts mares with Hackney horses would have any effect on the breeding of hunters?—I repeat I don't see why it is to be feared as much as some people seem to fear it.

2032. But at the same time you have not much experience of these particular districts?—I have no experience of the congested districts, I don't pretend to have.

2033. Mr. WRENCH—What are the horses chiefly bred in your district by the farmers, what class do they chiefly try to breed?—They breed to use and eventually to sell them, they want to make them useful during the period of their maturing and to sell them afterwards.

2034. And when they sell them is action a very great consideration?—It is an absolute necessity.

2035. It is an absolute necessity that a horse should have action to realise any paying price?—Of course.

2036. Have you formed any opinion as to whether a Hackney is best able to produce action or whether you can get equally good action from a thoroughbred with good action himself?—Well, I can only say that as a matter of opinion I think the Hackney would be more likely to produce action than a thoroughbred.

2037. Do you find the animals that are bred by your Hackney stallion now from half-bred mares have more action than ordinary action?—Well, I hardly like to answer that question because it seems touting my horse, as a matter of fact they have.

2038. And with regard to the mares you don't think that any such thing exists, at any rate in Ulster, as an old Irish breed?—Well, if it exists in Ireland at all it exists in Ulster, not that the mares have been indigenous plants but they have drifted there coming from the south as hunters and having met with accidents have been turned into use.

2039. Then a great many mares that are kept to breed from have come from the south?—Undoubtedly; Mr. Macafee tells you that the mare he bred his high-priced hunter from came from the south.

2040. If you were looking for a thoroughbred sire as a sire for hunters, would you consider it against a horse to have very high action or not?—It depends entirely on the nature of the action; if it is nice, straight action from the shoulder in front and the hocks well flexed behind, and no dishing or turning in of the feet, no landing on the heels or anything of that kind, I think good action is to be preferred to that of an animal that goes along digging his toes in the ground and making you think that he is going to fall and break your neck coming home.

2041. Do you think Hackneys have good action from the shoulders?—There are some of them have most charming and magnificent action, and others have the worst class of action, pumping their legs up and down in the same place and knocking their feet to pieces.

2042. And I think you said there were Hackneys that had as good staying powers as any horse?—Yes.

2043. Have you had any experience yourself of driving horses bred by Hackneys?—Yes, both pure bred and half-bred ones.

2044. For long distances?—Very long distances.

2045. What do you call long distances?—I think a horse that goes 60 miles or over that in a day—I mean during the time you drive him—and does it in good form without needing a touch of the whip or being spoken to, that he is a very good one.

2046. Have you had Hackneys that did that?—Yes, decidedly.

2047. Do you think breeding harness horses is equally paying with breeding hunters?—Well, a high-class harness horse is worth a deal of money, and is much sought after; but the ordinary harness horse, I hardly see how an Irish farmer can breed him to compete with American opposition.

2048. Is the American opposition very strong?—The American opposition is very strong, and American horses are being brought into Ireland in big batches weekly.

2049. Do you know at all what becomes of them?—I do; they go into carriages and they go into town harness work and parcel van work, and all that sort of thing.

2050. And if they are distributed and docked and so on, is it easy to distinguish them from Irish horses?—A man of considerable experience can do so

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with wonderful certainty; but a great many of them it is impossible to tell.

2051. Would you suggest any marking or branding of foreign horses that come into this country as a protection?—I don't know that it could be carried out; but I think it would be a very great matter if they were branded or marked, because I know that some of these mares are bred from and their stock will be sold as Irish horses just the same as these Hackney horses you speak of.

2052. But the class of horses bought by the London dealers, high-class carriage horses, they are not bred much in Ulster?—No, they are not bred much in Ulster, when they are bred it is more or less an accident.

2053. They have not the mares?—Those horses are bought in the fairs such as we have talked of—Ballinasloe, Mullingar, and all those fairs; they are bought there as three-year old colts by North of Ireland farmers, who put them through a process that they call feeding them, which, as Lord Rathdonnell has said, is something difficult to understand; but it means feeding them for sale. These men buy them as three-year olds and bring them to my neighbourhood. There is one man lives within four miles of my place, and he sells about two batches in the year to East; a batch will mean 16, 18, or 20 horses. He buys those all in the fairs I have stated as three-year olds; he brings them home and keeps them for nearly twelve months in a small loose box, and if you looked into it you would wonder how a horse could remain in it and be healthy. He feeds them with special mashes and food prepared under his superintendence; and, let it be scientific feeding or otherwise, the fact is when you come to see those horses before East comes to buy them you are astonished beyond measure at what they have grown into, and it makes you believe that what a man once said was true, that "the best of a horse goes in by his mouth." If they have got a reasonably good horse to begin with in one year by this keep they can grow a slashing upstanding horse worth the money East gives, ranging from £90 to £130 for these as four-year olds unbroken.

2054. And you think it really is the feeding they get during that last year that has more effect on their growth than their previous feeding?—I know the men that bred them in the south could not tell the horses again if they saw them.

2055. They grow to an extraordinary extent in that year?—They do.

2056. I don't suggest that the Hackney is at all the horse to produce a hunter, but have you ever heard of an instance of hunters produced by Hackney stallions?—I have, show-yard winners and famous horses over country.

2057. Have you heard of any that sold for large prices?—I know Mr. Cookson's "Flower Girl," that won first prize at Yorkshire, and first at the Royal Show, was out of a Hackney mare by a thoroughbred horse. I further know that Mr. John Logan, of the Lake District, in England, bred a chestnut horse, which he sold for 300 guineas to Stokes, of Market Harboro'; the horse was ridden two seasons with the Quorn, and made over 400 guineas at a public sale in Leicester, and it is said changed hands after at a higher price. That horse was got by "Sportsman," acknowledged not a very good Hackney.

2058. Do you know what mare?—It was a good mare, as near thoroughbred as possible. And I also know that Mr. Charles Wilson, of Kendal, Master of the Oxenholme Stag Hounds, that his famous horse "Ambrose," known all over the north of England, was bred in the same way by a Hackney stallion. I know from a good judge that both horses were fast enough for "High Leicestershire," and could stay with the best.

2059. I think you said that you considered the farmers in your district very intelligent, and you think that the small farmers, holding under 50 acres, who breed horses, are competent to give an opinion themselves as to what would suit them?—Perfectly.

2060. And you think that in any step to give them state aid their opinions ought to be taken as to the form in which the aid should be given?—If you give them the aid in a way they don't like they won't accept it; they are not naturally impudent, but they are very independent, and if they don't like it they won't have it; they will tell you they are much obliged to you, but it is no use to them and they will not trouble you.

2061. Have you ever attended any sales at Newmarket?—No I have never been to Newmarket. I have been present at some sales in Doncaster and the Blenkiron sale at Middlepark

2062. You think you have seen as many bad and useless animals among thoroughbreds for sires as you have among Hackneys?—I think there are a terrible lot of thoroughbreds that should not be allowed to get stock of any kind.

2063. And you think it would be well if some people took to breeding thoroughbreds for sires instead of simply breeding them for racing?—I daresay that would be very useful, but I have all along held the opinion that a sire's value is the stock he gets, and that you cannot tell until you see it.

2064. Therefore, you would not register?—Therefore I would not breed with great confidence from any horse however well bred or good-looking unless I had a sample of what he got; of course I would willingly enough make the experiment.

2065. That would put the prices up very much of those horses that did breed good stock?—Well, it ought, they are the ones that should be bred from. I am making some experiments myself at present to try and get at the truth of the Hackney question, and to find out whether it is going to do the harm which is feared. I have put my Hackney to a Russian Orloff mare, to an American Standard trotting mare, and to two hunter mares; these two mares foaled this year, and had very good-looking foals, but I regret to say both have died. I have put him also to a thoroughbred mare. I have one at the moment coming two-year old, bred from him and a clean thoroughbred mare, and I am going to see how these turn out before I express a strong opinion that Hackneys are going to destroy everything, as other people have done, who have not tried it.

2066. Do you know anything of a horse that Lord Charlemont had, called "Broad Arrow"?—I can't say at the moment that I actually saw him, but now that you have mentioned him, I bought a horse bred by him called "Montague" at Dungannon, a great horse and a typical weight-carrying hunter, and I sold him to a Leicestershire dealer for 200 guineas, and he was sold, as I heard, to Ford, of Leamington, who won first prize with him at the Warwick Royal Show, and then sold him for a very big price. I bought that horse's own brother, that had been specially trained for harness until I bought him, six years' old, and had never galloped in his life. We set him to gallop and jump, and tried a lot of schooling, and I showed him at the Dublin Show, and I believe he would have won only he had side bones. But he was sold in Sewell's yard, this fact being known, and was bought by a small dealer for £135 as a hunter. Those were by "Broad Arrow" out of a south of Ireland mare.

2067. And "Broad Arrow" was a Hackney?—Yes.

2068. Did he do much to improve the horses in that district?—I have always heard so, it is an accepted fact in the neighbourhood, and everybody in the neighbourhood would swear by him.

2069. Do you consider the Hackneys a sound breed or the reverse?—I think in the main they are an exceedingly sound, hardy breed of horse, and I think the great thing is to get size among them and to keep to riding types.

2070. Do you know at all how they are bred in Yorkshire, what really is the origin of the Hackney?—There is a sort of tradition there among all the old farmers you meet that they were the old roadster horse of their grandfathers and great-grandfathers, that they used to do long journeys on before the days of railways, and the present Hackneys are more or less the produce of those old nag mares and thoroughbred horses. I think there is a great deal of thoroughbred blood in the back breeding of some of the best Hackneys.

2071. I think Mr. La Touche asked you if you would explain your reasons as to why you thought Irish horses so much better than English horses, and if it was not from the fact that they were got from a thoroughbred horse and their dams by a thoroughbred horse. Is it not, perhaps, more that the size of the farms in Ireland has not made it necessary to use large horses and therefore that really there has not been much introduction of heavy cart blood?—I don't know, I could not really give an opinion on the subject, I think the circumstances under which the horses are reared in Ireland and the way they are fed and treated is so utterly different from the way they are done in England. They feed some of them on soft, rich, foggy pasture that only grows soft stuff, and if they have got one that they think is worth anything they put him into a bandbox and talk about him. In Ireland they knock him about and don't care much whether he is blemished or not.

2072. Then you think a good deal depends on the climate and the way the horse is brought up?—Yes, and youthful treatment.

2073. And is it not possible that Hackneys bred in Ireland under the same natural conditions may breed better horses than Hackneys bred in England?—That is one of the reasons I want to make a trial. We have beaten them in breeding other horses and I do not see why we should not beat them in breeding Hackneys also.

2074. With regard to the stallions in the North of Ireland, are there not a great number of nondescript stallions there at present?—Yes.

2075. Would you be surprised to hear that one-third of the entire stallions in Ireland are either cart horses or half-bred horses?—I was not aware of the fact; it is astonishing.

2076. As a matter of fact, do most of the foreign buyers require action?—As a matter of fact, they seem to me to appreciate it very much and to make it a speciality.

2077. CHAIRMAN—I would like to ask you a question. Is it not a fact that most of the sound young mares are taken from the breeders by the dealers and the unsound left behind?—Well, I think it is very much to be regretted that a great many of the good mares leave the country when we would like them to stay in it.

2078. You mean the dealer tempts the men with money and only takes the sound and leaves the unsound in the country?—Quite true, and I think it is an unfortunate fact that a great many mares are bred from simply because they are unsound and unfit for anything else.

2079. What effect must this have on the horse breeding industry of Ireland in the long run?—It depends, of course, on whether the special unsoundness that the mare suffers from is hereditary or otherwise; if hereditary it is greatly to be deplored that the mare should be bred from, and I think it would be a great matter if there was any Government arrangement for giving prizes to men, or rewards or premiums, or whatever you like to call it, for keeping their mares on until they were four or five years old. Personally I am a believer in breeding from a two-year-old mare; but many people are not.

2080. I was going to ask you a question on that very point about breeding from two-year-old mares?—I think you get just as good a foal from a two-year-old as any mare.

2081. MR. LA TOUCHE—You would put it to a horse at two years old?—Yes. I am speaking now of a well-grown two-year-old. I should not advise breeding from a backward, delicate two-year-old, and I should not put her to a two-year-old or three-year-old or a young horse. I should put her to an aged, matured horse of sound constitution; and if your two-year-old filly is well-reared and a scopy filly she will give you as good a foal as a mare ten years old.

2082. Mr. WRENCH.—She requires to be rather extra well done?—I don't know; I think as a matter of fact she has a shade less milk, but I think it is of better quality than that of an old worn mare

2083 You don't think it hurts the filly.—I do not; I know the theoretical reasons are against breeding from them, but my practical experience is that it does not do harm.

2084. Have you given them the horse again at three years old?—Yes.

2085. And gone on?—Yes; without any evil result, the mare continued growing and developing.

2086. And grows into as good a mare?—I think so; there may be exceptional cases.

2087. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think in the case of a filly that has not developed properly when she is put to the stud that it would make her grow?—That is rather a curious point, and I don't know that I have tried it in horses, but I tried it in dogs.

2088. Mr. WRENCH.—With what result?—I was once very keen on Irish water spaniels, used to show them over the kingdom with great success, and I bred a litter once I was very proud of and fond of, and in this litter was one special bitch that had all the points I had been breeding for. I was so delighted with her that I wrote to the editor of the *Field*—I am speaking of twenty-five years ago, it was "Stonehenge" then—asking whether I should breed from her when she first came in use. She came in use when eight months old. He wrote to me giving all the scientific reasons against it, that the animal had the fœtus to support as well as herself, and that it checked development, and that it was a great mistake to breed from her until she was two years old. I did not breed from her until she was two years old. I did everything I knew how to grow her big and good, but, as a matter of fact, I don't think she ever grew a hair's breadth from she first came in use. Another bitch pup of the same lot I gave to a friend, and he put it to the dog at eight months old, and it grew one of the biggest and best I ever saw. When my bitch was put to the dog at two years old she had a weak and miserable litter of pups, and spread herself over them and killed them; she did not seem to know what to do with them, and she did the same every time afterwards.

2089. CHAIRMAN.—You have no experience though as regards the different produce of two-year-old and three-year-old fillies, that is if you put a two-year-old filly to a horse and a three-year-old filly which is likely to produce the best foal?—I have at present a mare, and I have a three-year-old colt from her, that is three at May coming, and I have one two-year-old from the same mare, and from that mare's sister I have another one coming two. Well, I think the two-year-old's produce is quite as good as that of the three-year-old, and in a case where I bred from the mare at two years old and bred again when she was three years old her produce as four years old is even better than the first one; in fact it is an animal I showed at the Belfast Show in the yearling class, and it got first in a pretty large class; that was from a mare put to the horse as a three-year-old, she having had a foal as a two-year-old.

2090 Mr WRENCH.—Have you ever done this, put a mare to the horse when she is two years old, breeding from her again at three, and then giving her a year's rest?—This one of mine has taken a year's rest, and she is in foal again now, so if we live long enough I will be able to answer the question; she missed a year.

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Mr. Nathaniel Morton.

2091. Have you ever found that when you give a mare to a horse at two year sold and three years old that then they take a year's rest themselves?—I have no experience except this one example, and it is as you say.

2092. CHAIRMAN.—Do you believe in the show-yard as being a correct test of the hunter?—Well, I don't quite know what form you want the answer to come in. At such a show as Dublin I take it that a man is very dense if he cannot tell whether he likes a horse or not with the opportunity he gets to see a horse here, especially if he sees him in the jumping competition.

2093. But without the jumping competition?—My opinion is that all the horses that prizes are given to should be tried for the purpose for which they are avowedly offered.

2094. Now, there was a mare that you mentioned that was got by a certain Hackney stallion that got first prize, I think you said, at the Royal Show in England?—And at the Great Yorkshire.

2095. Did that animal ever cross a country?—That I cannot tell of my own knowledge, but I can ascertain, I got the information from a very reliable friend in a letter which is in my pocket at this moment, if you care to hear it I will give it in his own words.

2096. Mr. WRENCH.—You can hand the letter in afterwards?—With pleasure, the letter was an ordinary private letter with no thought of being produced here whatever. I may tell you before either reading or producing this letter it comes from a man of acknowledged position in England, a great hunting man, a man who has a big stud of hunters always, and he has four daughters, the finest horsewomen I ever saw in any country, so he knows what he is talking about. I asked him the question could he give me any particulars of any hunters that had Hackney blood in them, and had any merit left. So, he says:—"I don't think I can give you any special particulars about Hackney bred hunters that are not already well-known. Certainly several of our best and most successful show horses are so bred, notably Mr. Cookson's Flower Girl, who was first, both at the Great Yorkshire and the Royal, she was out of a Hackney mare. John Logan's chestnut horse that he sold to Stokes for £300, and was afterwards sold by auction at Leicester for over four hundred, after going with the Quorn for two seasons, and again changed hands at, I believe, a still higher price, he was got by Sportsman, a not very good Hackney, and out of a blood mare. This I know of my own knowledge, as he was bred near me. Again Charles Wilson's celebrated Ambrose is the same way bred, and both of those were fast enough for High Leicestershire, and could stay with the very best, indeed the chestnut horse was not only the fastest, boldest, and most brilliant hunter I ever saw, but the highest class looking one. I don't say but these two are exceptions, but it is nonsense to say that a bit of good Hackney blood must needs damn a hunter; if a horse gallops in good hunting form, and gives you a good feel, of which each man must be his own judge, and can stay, and I have known, and you have known, Hackneys that are as good and game, and as good as any blood one, I think he is none the worse, but rather the better of a dash of the big Hackney, as he will bring you home after a long day without digging his toes into the ground. Of course we all like them as near clean-bred as possible if they can carry the weight, but I would much rather have a bit of a cross of good game Hackney than a great lumbering Yorkshire coach horse or Cleveland Bay or soft cart horse, though I have seen good and valuable hunters bred from a quarter-bred, clean, active, Clydesdale mare, indeed, the third cross so bred, if the mare is wisely selected, often results in a good weight carrier. We in England have none of what you call big old Irish mares with no cross of any other blood, neither do I think you have, and if all the Dublin winners and other costly hunters sent from Ireland could only tell their real parentage, it would open the eyes of the sticklers for pure breeding. If they would select their Hackneys, big ones with good shoulders, and quality and action, they would do good to the hunter breeders in Ireland and not harm."

2097. CHAIRMAN.—Who is that from?—Mr. Barton, of Warton Grange, Carnforth, Justice of the Peace for Lancashire, an important man, well known in the district.

2098. It is usually acknowledged that the Irish-bred horse is stouter than the English-bred horse?—I think so.

2199. Why should that be?—I don't know any reason, except from that style of soft pampered feeding they give them in England; the very grass they have, the pasture in Yorkshire, is that thick, soft, foggy stuff, that they can always be filled with, and it does not seem to grow bone or put mettle into them at all.

2100. You said you wished you had cut the throat of certain horses you met in England?—I meant they were of no value and were unprofitable.

2101. Do you suppose if they had gone through a course of feeding in the North of Ireland they would be picked up by Mr. Wimbush or Mr. East?—They were not of the type he buys, but I have no doubt that he gets some soft ones in Ireland; but I must beg you to remember that that feeding process belongs only to a certain class of horses and to a certain class of men. I would consider it a suicidal thing to do with a hunter; I would consider it the worst treatment possible with a hunter; it is only done with these horses to make them into big good-looking horses for London carriage horses.

2102. Would you do it with Hackneys?—I would not, I think. You would grow them into very coarse looking bundles, that would show very little quality if treated like that.

2103. What would happen, would they get coarse?—Nothing stands what we call feeding as well as the thoroughbred blood.

2104. Why is that, is it because the shapes are better?—I don't know that I could give an intelligent reason for it; I know it to be so, but I could hardly tell you why.

2105. Mr. WRENCH.—Nothing stands feeding in what way, how do you mean?—You cannot hurt a blood worse with plenty of condition; he looks all the better the more you have on him; if you have a common bred horse and load him up with condition you get a bullock.

2106. CHAIRMAN.—Do you mean that would happen in the case of Hackneys?—Well, I don't think it would be to the advantage of Hackneys to keep them idle and pamper them with feeding; I don't know why it should be so.

2107. In answering Mr. LaTouche you said you were comparing the value of the produce of a thoroughbred stallion and the produce of a Hackney, was the stock you named as the produce of your Hackneys and being so valuable, was that stock from pure bred Hackney mares or from a Hackney stallion crossed with half-bred mares?—The most valuable I have had have been pure bred ones.

2108. In answering Mr. La Touche you mentioned that, and I wanted to know whether it was the pure bred hackney stallion and the pure bred Hackney mare you referred to?—I really don't know how it works out. I mentioned the case of these two horses bred by the Dungannon horse, they were by a Hackney horse out of an Irish mare, one I sold for £200, and the other went at Sewell's for £130, when he was blemished and unsound; that shows they were fairly valuable.

2109. Bred from a half-bred mare?—They were from a south of Ireland hunting mare, and Lord Charlemont's Broad Arrow.

2110. Now as to the pure breed?—I think I have some pure bred Hackneys that I value more highly than any half-bred ones; I am referring to two in particular that I think have exceptional action about them, but there are others I think that are not specially valuable.

2111. Mr. WRENCH.—You have had your Hackney stallion standing at Ballymena for three years, have you not?—Yes.

2112. Is your experience that if you let the service of your Hackney stallion say for £2 or some reasonable fee, would you get a great many more applications from farmers than if you put a good thoroughbred horse at the same price?—I think as the taste goes at present in that neighbourhood, without venturing to say whether the people are right or not, they would certainly go for the Hackney.

2113. You can get enough services taken up at £5 now?—As many as I want.

2114. And you could not do that with a thoroughbred horse?—One gentleman sent to Newmarket and bought four most beautiful mares, thoroughbred, and of the highest pedigree, and sent the whole lot to my Hackney horse with the idea of trying to breed high-class carriage horses.

2115. Of course you have got no results yet?—No, I think it was this year they came first.

2116. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You said in answer to Mr. Wrench that you thought the farmers ought to be consulted and their opinions taken as to what would be the best means of improving the breed of horses, 20 and 30 acre farmers, did you not?—Well, I don't know whether I put it in those words or not, but I did say that if whatever benefit you offered them did not strike them as a benefit they would not accept it.

2117. Then that rather tends to prove there would not be very much object in consulting them, they would only do what they liked in the end?—They would tell you what they wanted if you cared to carry it out.

2118. But they would not engage that they would follow the advice you gave them unless your advice fitted in with their preconceived ideas, they would not take your advice?—I think my experience of North of Ireland farmers is that you cannot persuade them against their will. I don't suggest that you cannot teach them, if you can show them an improvement they will pick it up very quickly and adopt it, and adopt it thankfully.

2119. At the present time the prejudice of the small North of Ireland farmer is in favour of the Hackney stallion as opposed to the thoroughbred horse?—I would not say as much as that, some of them will breed from a thoroughbred and prefer it and some will breed from a Hackney, a good deal will depend on the nature of the mare. There are other thoroughbred stallions that are getting a fair amount of mares now, Mr. Russell's stallion is within three miles of my place and he has a fair number of mares.

2120. Then you don't contend that the farmers are prejudiced in favour of the Hackney stallion?—I dont say so particularly, but they are very fond of action, they want usefulness, they dont want anything weedy, they want an animal that they can use during its youth and sell at four years old, and if it misses that and chances to be a mare they like it to breed from.

2121. Have you got any thoroughbred Hackney mares?—Yes.

2122. That you bought in England, I suppose?—I have several I bred. I have bred a good many.

2123. Have you sold any Hackneys of your own breeding?—I don't know that I have, I don't think I have ever offered any.

2124. Is there not a Mr. Kirk in your neighbourhood who breeds Hackneys?—Yes, all his mares were with my horse this year, four of them, but I would not call them high class Hackney mares, I think there were only, perhaps, two pure bred, if that many, one was hunting mare he has been breeding from, and another was two-year old that he had bred from a Hackney mare and a horse of the Prince of Wales.

2125. Do you know if he sent a Hackney across to England to be sold?—I know he sent some this year and was offered very bad prices for them.

2126. Have you sold any of your Hackneys in England?—I did.

2127. Did you get good prices?—Very bad.

2128. To what do you attribute that?—I think they were not good ones to begin with and they got no attention whatever at the sale, they were simply sent over to an auction yard to be sold without reserve, and nobody went with them, for I did not care a row of pins what became of them, but I think with all respect that that does not prove anything, for I was present at two sales lately where I saw a fashionably bred thoroughbred mare sold for five guineas and another for £7 10*s*.

2129. Mr. WRENCH—Where was that?—At Belfast, General M'Guinness's sale, one was sold for five guineas, and Lisconnon, a black mare that he gave 300 guineas for, and for which he paid twenty sovereigns for the service of a horse, was auctioned before my eyes for £7 10*s*.

2130. Were there many other thoroughbreds sold?—Yes, all sold at equally slaughtering prices. I was present at York when I saw some very fashionable thoroughbred mares in foal sold for seven guineas and prices such as that, so what horses make at an auction sale under exceptional circumstances, I hold, proves nothing.

The Commission adjourned until next morning

Nov. 18, 1896

FIFTH DAY.—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18TH, 1896

Present.—LORD RATHDONNELL, in the Chair; Mr. F. S. WRENCH, Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, Mr. J. L. CAREW, and COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. Robert Todd Huston.

Mr. ROBERT TODD HUSTON examined.

2132. CHAIRMAN—You are a veterinary surgeon, resident in Armagh?—I am.

2133. To what extent is horse-breeding carried on in your neighbourhood?—There is a good deal of horse-breeding.

2134. What class of horse does the farmer generally breed?—A harness horse. I might say altogether a harness horse. From the better class of mares they breed a good coaching horse, or a double harness horse, if you understand.

2135. From what sort of mares?—From very good, short-legged mares—good-going mares with a certain amount of quality about them, and those horses are got by a thoroughbred horse.

2136. Mr. WRENCH.—The mares?—The harness horses I spoke of are got out of these mares by a thoroughbred horse.

2137. CHAIRMAN.—Then the sires that are used in the district are chiefly thoroughbreds?—No; chiefly half-bred. The mares I now speak of are a very small proportion of the mares that are bred from.

2138. What is the other proportion?—They are a worse class of mares—light-boned, with less action; and the farmers prefer to put them to half-bred horses.

2139. What do you mean by a half-bred horse?—A half-bred horse is a horse got out of a useful mare by a thoroughbred horse.

2140. How is the half-bred sire bred?—He is generally got by a thoroughbred horse—almost invariably got by a thoroughbred horse, and out of their own mares—that is, a useful and perhaps a better mare than the usual run of them.

2141. Do you keep a half-bred stallion yourself?—I do; he is got by "Baliol," and has been a very successful horse, and out of a good, well-bred mare. He was the property of the late J. A. M. Cope, of Drumiely. I don't know how she was got, but she was a very strong and well-bred animal. He bought the animal in London, and hacked it himself, and he was a very heavy man, fifteen or sixteen stone in weight. He bought her for riding purposes.

2142. Would you fancy the mare was got by a thoroughbred horse?—I would not fancy that mare was by a thoroughbred horse. I could not say. She was a very good-going mare, and might possibly have had Hackney blood in her.

2143. Have you had any experience in the breeding of Hackneys?—From Hackneys?

2144. Yes?—I have.

2145. Give us your experience?—The best mares at present in our neighbourhood are mares that the farmers bred themselves by a horse—I don't know whether he was a thoroughbred Hackney or not. He was the property of the late Lord Charlemont—"Broad Arrow." Then there was the late Lord Caledon's "Character." Both those horses had Hackney blood in them. The mares from them are the best mares, and when bred with thoroughbred sires got the best stock in our neighbourhood. Any farmer that has one of those mares would not part with them for money.

2146. Mr. WRENCH.—What do you say about the produce?—They are horses that are long since left the country; they are dead. But the mares got by those horses are our best brood mares, and get the best stock that is in our country when served by a thoroughbred horse, particularly when served by a thoroughbred horse that suits them. The unfortunate part of it is that the horses that have come to our neighbourhood have not been horses calculated to get harness horses—they have been short horses; I am speaking of the thoroughbreds there under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

2147. CHAIRMAN.—You say in answer to question 18 in the queries sent out that you know many people who have lost severely by the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—I do, sir. Those are men that had mares that were not suited to thoroughbred horses; they were too light-boned, and had not action sufficient; and these farmers put them to the Government horses when they came, fancying these horses would get wonderful stock. They had, previous to that, been breeding from half-bred horses, and they bred a good deal better from the half-breds than from the Government horses when these arrived, because the mares were not suited to the Government horses.

2148. What class of horse do you consider pays the best to produce in your district?—A good harness horse; it is worth £100 and over when it is four years old, and that amount is easily got for it.

2149. With regard to the answer you give to question 26, have you ever seen a stallion the result of the cross you recommend by a thoroughbred out of a Hackney mare?—I would say that both these horses—Lord Charlemont's "Broad Arrow" and the Earl of Caledon's "Character"—must have been got in or about that way. And there is another stallion at present serving in the district out of a thoroughbred mare by Lord Caledon's "Character," and he is one of our best half-bred sires at present.

2150. Mr. WRENCH.—What is he out of?—He is out of a thoroughbred mare, "Nancy Quin"; he is an old horse now.

2151. You don't know that Lord Charlemont's horse was a pure Hackney?—No; I understand that there was Hackney blood in both Lord Charlemont's and Lord Caledon's horses, and for all I know one or other might have been thoroughbred Hackneys.

2152. CHAIRMAN.—What sort of mares is he mated to, and with what results?—To the second class of mares—mares not suited to a thoroughbred horse; mares of lighter bone, with not sufficient action or quality to go to a thoroughbred horse.

2153. You say the bulk of the stock is more like the grandsire than the sire, and therefore recommend the thoroughbred as grandsires?—Yes; to the half-bred horse most decidedly.

2154. Would not the desired result be more likely to be attained if both sire and grandsire were thoroughbred?—Well, no; because, you see, you require to serve by a half-bred horse: you must introduce something to put bone and action into those weedy mares. If I put a thoroughbred horse on these light, weedy mares, as the farmers at present are doing, the stock is worse than the mare itself; and I contend that in order to improve the breed of horses the mares must be served in such a way that the stock will be better than themselves. That is at present not being done in our district, and I say it

is possible to put a sound horse on every mare in the district—a horse of such a class that the stock will be better than the mare herself.

2155. You also recommend the establishment of Government studs. How would they benefit any but those in close proximity to them?—I would travel the horses They would require to be travelled over a district large enough to make them self-supporting. The stallions should be self-supporting, and would be so if they were travelled over a district large enough; there would be no difficulty in that.

2156. What would you do as regards the local committees? Of whom would they consist?—There could not be a better committee in our district than the present one; its members are men who thoroughly understand the breeding of horses. They are the men appointed under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme. I have acted as their veterinarian since the scheme was begun, and we see it is perfectly hopeless the class of mares. When twenty mares come up only four or five of them are suited to the thoroughbred horses.

2156a. Have you considered that a stud farm such as you suggest, if the fees charged for stallions were small, would pay its way as you recommend?—I do, I would say that a thoroughbred horse might serve eighty mares at a fee of £2 a piece, and if he travelled over a district large enough and was the right kind of horse he would get that. Then you would require a half-bred and Hackney, or two half-bred horses to travel over the same district, and they could serve at ten shillings a piece?—They would require to serve as low as that in order to cut out all the useless horses at present in the country. That is what is ruining the breeding of horses. Armagh and district are swarming with horses kept as stallions, they do their work for the farmers that keep them, and in the season they are brought into the market and are let for a pound, or two and sixpence, or at the end of the market day for a drink.

2157. CHAIRMAN.—Have you ever heard the result of the Congested Districts Board's returns from the paying point of view?—I saw in the papers that it cost them £107 I think for a horse. I saw that in the evidence given before this Commission, that is the only thing I saw about it.

2158. But from a paying point of view, I mean?—I heard that it cost them £107; I take it, it cost them £107 per horse per year to keep them. I don't know whether that is a fact or not.

2159. You don't know further than that?—No; I am quite satisfied if the right sort of horses are sent to our district the farmers could afford to pay fairly good fees. Of course, I can say nothing of the congested districts.

2160. Do you consider that the farmers would take the trouble to send their mares any distance to the stud farm that you recommend?—I would travel the horses to the market towns. That is where the service is done amongst the small farmers. The horses attend the markets and the mares are served on the market day. It would certainly be also necessary in our district to have a draught sire in order to serve all the mares. I think the committee should be in a position when the mares were brought before them to make a selection as to which mare was to be sent to a certain class of horse, and that in order to serve all the mares profitably they would require a draught sire—for there are a number of half-bred mongrel Clydesdale mares being brought there and they could only be bred profitably from by serving them, say, with a heavy English Shire horse, for they are too carty looking to expect to breed good harness horses from.

2161. What sort of soil is there in your district?—One side of Armagh is entirely clay and limestone; on the other side, it is a sort of gravelly soil not so good for the breeding of horses. I speak of between Armagh and Monaghan.

2162. Would most of the land be worked by moderately light active quick horses, or do the farmers require heavy horses?—Light active horses, not very heavy horses, the most of them.

2163. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say that the County Armagh is full of stallions, but it appears by the return here that there are only nineteen—the smallest number of stallions in any county in Ireland. Do you think that is so?—I would fancy that there are a good many farmers who had working stallions and served a few mares round their own neighbourhood, and brought the stallions to the towns and served a few mares in the towns of Armagh and Keady and small towns—and that these stallions are not in that list.

2164. Mr. WRENCH.—The explanation of that is I think that there are a great many stallions in Monaghan and the adjoining counties that travel from one county to another, and they might actually appear in other counties, so that the witness is perfectly right in saying that the stallions might come into Armagh.

Witness.—Six or seven of them travel from Monaghan every Monday night, and stand in Armagh on Tuesday.

2165. Mr. CAREW.—They would be registered for Armagh and Monaghan?—These under-bred horses are not registered at all, that I am aware of.

2166. Mr. WRENCH.—That is a return of every stallion in Ireland, and is for the year 1893. They would be registered in Monaghan?

Witness.—And then, of course, stallions come on from Tyrone, from Aughnacloy and Ballygawley, and all around.

2167. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say you bred some very good harness horses in Armagh?—A few.

2168. And are they as a rule got by thoroughbred horses?—They are the best.

2169. How do you think the mares are bred that they are out of?—They are half-bred mares; they, or most of them, are probably bred in the south and brought up to us.

2170. Who breeds this best class?—The big farmers—the farmers who are not eligible under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, as they are above £150 valuation, and the better farmers below £150 valuation.

2171. You said the ordinary mare had not sufficient quality to go to a thoroughbred?—They have not.

2172. Do you think their produce would get more quality by going to a half-bred?—I have seen more quality, a good deal more quality, obtained by going to a half-bred than to a thoroughbred; and then, of course, the produce have more strength and action, and, whether they have the quality or not, they are more saleable; the others are practically unsaleable.

2173. With respect to these half-bred Clydesdale mares, you said they were only suited to breed draught horses?—Yes.

2174. Don't you think if they were crossed with a thoroughbred horse, the filly of that cross might be capable of breeding a good class horse by a thoroughbred horse?—I don't think so. I don't like the introduction of Clydesdale blood into the harness horse at all. You always get Clydesdale quarters and thighs, with tails set too low, and a bad shaped head. I have never seen any good results from such a cross.

2175. Is a heavy draught horse a necessary horse in your part of Armagh at all?—No; but that class of mare will come before any committee that is selecting, and, if the committee have not a draught horse to serve that mare, then the mares will find their way either to the Hackney or half-bred, and the stock will be worse than the mare herself. I say the committee should be in a position to deal with all the mares that come before them, and unless they have a draught horse to serve these mares they would not be in that position.

2176. Do you think it would be a good thing to encourage that breed of animal at all? Do you think it would be to the advantage of the Irish farmer?—I do; certainly.

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Mr. Robert Todd Huston.

2177. Don't you think it would be better to cross it out?—I don't think it is possible to cross it out. You have the animals there and you must deal with them. By crossing these mares with three or four strains of Hackney or thoroughbred blood, however, you would eventually, if you crossed them with three or four strains, probably get mares that would go to a thoroughbred. That is my idea, to cross the mares in such a way that eventually we will have mares to get to a thoroughbred horse, and I say it is unnecessary to give prizes to the farmers to keep their good mares, because they will keep their good mares if they have them. I would work them all up to go to the thoroughbred horse, except the cart horses, for I don't think you would hardly ever work them up to breed good harness horses from the half-bred Clydesdale mares.

2178. Then the mares should be covered so that their stock could go to thoroughbred horses eventually?—Eventually; that is my idea. And to get a large majority of the mares, at present being served, to breed stock to go to a thoroughbred horse, it will be necessary to introduce Hackney blood.

2179. You think the Hackney blood is preferable to what you call the half-bred stallion?—I prefer a half-bred stallion got by a thoroughbred out of a Hackney mare. Then I have the grandsire of my stock out of a thoroughbred horse.

2180. Would you prefer that to a stallion got by a thoroughbred horse out of a half-bred mare?—Not if the half-bred mare pleased me.

2181. Out of a hunting mare?—Out of a good hunting mare if she had action or bone. I would prefer her to a Hackney mare, but they are very hard to get.

2182. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Have you an equal objection to the Cleveland and the Shire as you have to the Clydesdale?—I don't like the Clydesdale at all, because there are so many diseases follow the Clydesdale horse.

2183. You object particularly to him, but you also object to the introduction of others. There are different classes of mares and different classes of horses, and you want to get bone and substance and power. Putting the thoroughbred and the Hackney on one side do you object to the Cleveland or the Shire horse, or the Yorkshire coaching horse?—I don't like the Cleveland at all.

2184. Or the Yorkshire coaching horse that we heard of yesterday?—I object to the Cleveland—any of them I have seen I object to. I don't like them as coaching horses at all, they would not cross with our mares. There is generally a want of muscle about their thighs and forearms which the Hackney has. As a rule they are not as good goers as the Hackney. I speak of those two horses, Lord Charlemont's "Broad Arrow" and Lord Caledon's "Character." These horses I know. They have bred mares that are still in our country, and are our best mares. From practical experience I am speaking.

2185. Mr. CAREW.—You say the half-bred sire you would prefer would be one by a thoroughbred out of a Hackney mare?—Yes.

2186. For harness purposes?—Altogether. We have no good mares in our district calculated to get hunters.

2187. So that you would not like that for the hunter breed?—No.

2188. You are speaking entirely from the harness point of view?—Yes. If we have a hunter in our district it has to be sold in the Royal Dublin Society's Show or at the Ballinasloe fair.

2189. Between the Hackney dam and the half-bred dam, if the latter had bone and substance you would prefer the half-bred dam to the Hackney?—I would.

2190. Mr. WRENCH.—What becomes of the horses that are chiefly sold in your district; where are they bought, and by whom?—The best class of coaching horses are bought from the farmers by dealers that live in our country; and Mr. Wimbush, London, Dollard and East, Withers, and those men attend at these dealers' places and buy them in lots of from fifty to a hundred.

2191. Are those the class produced by the people you call here "Class I."—that is over £150 valuation?—Quite so.

2192. Those animals are bred by that class of breeder?—Yes, and when that class of breeder has a very good mare he puts her to a half-bred horse, he gets a horse that goes off with that lot; but they are principally got by thoroughbred horses out of the good mares, and those are the class we ought to try to encourage, and get every farmer if possible a mare that will breed that class of horse, for that will pay them.

2193. Then you take your class number two. In this you say the mares are not good enough to go to the thoroughbred horse?—No; and the half-bred horse suits these best.

2194. Then class three?—A very poor lot of mares.

2195. Should you think a Hackney is required there to enable them to produce good mares to breed from in future?—Yes. Class two would require to be served about once by a half-bred horse in order to get produce fit to go to a thoroughbred horse. Class three would require to be served perhaps two or three times before the produce would be fit to go to a thoroughbred horse, but we should always move towards that.

2196. You say the best mares and the mares that go to a thoroughbred are the mares got by the two horses you named?—They are.

2197. You cannot say of your own knowledge whether they were both Hackneys?—They call them Hackneys in the district, that is all I know. And I know perfectly well if you could bring "Broad Arrow" back to-day to our district and served mares with him there is not a farmer in the district would sell a mare by him they have such an opinion of him.

2198. Had most of the animals bred by "Broad Arrow" action?—Magnificent action. That is their great point. He started to serve at ten shillings a mare, and before he was done five pounds was the charge, and the farmers eating one another for his service.

2199. You consider action requisite to enable a farmer to get a good price for a horse?—Yes, for a harness horse.

2200. You think that breeding harness horses in Ireland would pay farmers better than trying to breed hunters?—You must change all their mares before they can breed hunters, and I don't care how you cross their mares you will never make them into hunters.

2201. Are they sold to other parts of Ireland or out of the country?—None go to other parts of Ireland. We bring a lot of horses from the south to our district, and sell them then to dealers. As a rule all our farmers keep their horses on until they have four-year-old mouths or three and-a-half. They sell them with a mouth representing four-and-a-half.

2202. With regard to the Clydesdale blood, do you think it would be much more injurious in the animals you want to breed from than a cross of Hackney. When you want to produce a harness horse you don't like Clydesdale blood?—No, I don't; Clydesdale blood would do them harm.

2203. Are there many Clydesdale stallions in the north?—Yes, and doing a great deal of harm.

2204. Would you be in favour of requiring people to take out a licence for stallions?—How would it act?

2205. To pay so much for a licence to show that their stallions must be sound. Are there not many unsound at present?—The bulk of the stallions are unsound.

2206. In some countries they are obliged to take out a licence to show that their stallions are sound Would you approve of that?—Certainly.

2207. You think it would be a good system?—Yes.

2208. Do you think people would object to it?—Any man with an unsound stallion would object.

2209. But the public generally would appreciate such a regulation?—I believe they would.

2210. If the farmers knew there was a guarantee that a stallion was sound would they appreciate that? They would to a certain extent. But the great point is this—the farmers go to the cheap sire, and we must give them a good sire at the same price they are getting the bad sires for if we are to do good.

2211. What size farms have the men you call class three?—Ten to twenty-five acres.

2212. Are there a great many horse breeders among them?—There are.

2213. You think it would be quite impossible to stop that class of farmer from breeding horses?—I don't see how that could be done.

2214. You would not agree with some of the evidence that those farmers ought not to be allowed to breed horses?—I would not indeed. If a man can do it profitably, and if he is given a horse to suit his mare, it could be done profitably.

2215. You think he could make a good profit from breeding if he had the proper class of sire placed within his reach?—Yes. In my establishment this year there were over 200 mares served by very inferior half-bred horses of all shapes and kinds; and if those farmers had got good half-bred horses at the same price as they got these miserable brutes it would certainly improve the breed of horses.

2216. Do you think a Shire horse would be too heavy for the mares or the work required in your district?—I don't think so.

2217. You think he would suit with the carty mares?—Yes; there is a great inclination at the present time to put a heavy horse on more of the mares than there was some years ago, owing, I suppose, to the depreciation in the price of horses. The year before last at the end of the season I castrated nine half-breds that were serving in the district. This year I castrated two, showing a distinct falling off in the number of half-bred horses.

2218. Can you give any definite suggestion as to how you would take the opinion of those people as to the class of horses that should be sent to their district?—I think the local committee would be an exceedingly good judge.

2219. How would you select your local committee?—The Royal Dublin Society could suggest a very good committee. I could snggest no better committee than we have.

2220. Would you leave that selection to the Royal Dublin Society?—I would not have the slightest objection.

2223. And on your local committee who represent these small farmers?—We have men who know their wants, and men who during the working of the Royal Dublin Society scheme have seen these mares annually, and seen their stock, and who know exactly what the farmers want.

2222. Would you recommend that the Royal Dublin Society should register other horses besides thoroughbreds?—Half-breds, yes.

2223. Would you lay down any definite number of crosses these half-breds must have to enable them to be registered?—Well, of course, a half-bred of necessity should be bound to be got by a thoroughbred horse.

2224. But how many crosses would you require on the dam's side?—I would not require any crosses if the horse was what was required.

2225. Would you register the horse bred so before it was known what stock he would get?—No; I don't think so.

2226. You would wait to see whether he was a good stock getter or not?—Yes, I think it would be a good plan to produce the stock got by the horse before he was registered.

2227. Do you know anything about these American horses that they say are brought into the country?—I have seen a great many of them.

2228. In your own district?—No, about Belfast.

2228A. Are they calculated to do good or harm?—They will reduce the price of Irish horses, and are doing so.

2229. Will these animals be of any use to the farmers as brood mares?—No.

2230. You don't approve of the class?—No; they are leggy mares; there is a want of muscle about them—about their legs.

2231. Would you suggest that they should be branded in any way?—Yes, I would, most decidedly.

2232. You think that would be an improvement?—It would.

2233. You think that people would be slow to buy branded horses?—They would.

2234. CHAIRMAN.—With regard to Clydesdales and Shires and Clevelands and cart horses generally—with regard to their bone, although bigger to look at, is it not much softer and more porous?—A great deal.

2235. More liable to fly and break?—Certainly.

2236. Do you know from experience that the difficulty with which breeders of heavy horses have to contend is their feet, and the bones connected with their feet?—Yes.

2237. Is that the chief thing?—Yes, with Clydesdales; but I don't think it is so much the case with the English Shire horse—he is a much sounder horse than the Clydesdale, and that is why I suggest him.

2238. If a half-bred horse, as you describe, approved of and registered by some competent board, was standing in the same locality as a Clydesdale, Cleveland, Hackney, or cart horse, serving mares at the same fee, to which stallion would the farmers in your district send their mares?—The bulk of them would send them to the half-bred horse. I say it would take two half-breds to do as much work as one thoroughbred or one draught horse. If you had these four horses travelling in a district, it would take the two, a half-bred and a Hackney, or two half-breds, to do the work of one of the others.

2239. You include the Hackney, then, in the same class as the half-bred?—I do. If I had two half-breds got in the right way, I would prefer them to the Hackney.

2240. In your district are the sound fillies sold much, or do the farmers retain them for breeding purposes, and sell the unsound ones if they can?—As a rule they part with their sound fillies; as the fillies come on as a rule they are parted with.

2241. What will that lead to in the long run?—If they were satisfied that these fillies would breed well, I am quite sure the farmers would keep more of them. They change their horses very frequently with us, and they change their mares too. A few of them breed from two or three-year-old mares, and they take two or three foals from one, and they sell that mare.

2242. Where do they go to replace the mare they sell?—You mean the mare that would probably replace the two-year-old filly that was going away?

2243. Where would they get that mare?—They would breed it.

2244. If it turns out sound?—They would breed a filly or two and sell it again.

2245. At what age?—They would sell it at about the same age—three-year-old off or four-year-old.

2246. Have you had any experience in breeding from two-year-olds and three-year-olds?—I have seen a good deal of it. I think that it injures the mare if she is bred from as a two-year-old. She does not grow as well or as tall, and it takes her a couple of years to pick up again. The farmers generally have to keep that mare one year longer than they otherwise would to have her ready for the market. Breeding from a three-year-old, I think, does no harm.

2247. Mr. CAREW.—What do you say as to the stock from a two-year-old?—They are not as big or as strong, but numbers of them do well.

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Mr. Robert Todd Huston.

2247A. CHAIRMAN.—Is the dam as well able to feed a foal at two years old as at three years old, or the reverse?—I think she would feed it quite as well.

2248. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You don't recommend it?—Not two-year-olds.

2249. Mr. WRENCH.—What do you think of breeding at two years old and then giving the mare one year's rest?—The farmers have to do that to get the animals ready for the market.

2250. Yes, but as brood mares. Is it not the fact that a great many teeth are shed during the fourth year? If the mare is foaling at four years old, she has not only to feed her foal, but to supply a good deal of nutriment for her teeth?—She sheds an equal number of teeth from three years old on whether she is foaling at three or whether she is foaling at four.

2251. But is it not a fact that in the fourth year a horse sheds a good many teeth?—He does; he sheds more than as a two-year-old.

2252. A horse has not as much to do in producing bone for teeth at three years old as at four years old?—There is the same at three, but not at two.

2253. From two to three not as much regarding its teeth as from three to four?—Not quite; I don't say it would influence the mare very much.

2254. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—A three-year-old sheds as many teeth as does a four-year-old: you say that?—Yes.

2255. CHAIRMAN.—Do you consider a filly is as strong at three as she is at four?—No; that is why I don't recommend her to be bred from at two because you see she is foaling at three; in the other case she is foaling at four. I think she gives as much milk at three as at four, but I don't think she is as strong or as fit or bears as good a foal.

2256. Mr. CAREW.—You say it stints her growth to breed from her at two?—I do.

2257. Does she recover that growth by a rest?—She never grows as tall.

2258. Mr. WRENCH.—You think she never recovers that?—She is broader and squatter.

2259. Then if you want to prevent her getting leggy you breed from her at two?—Yes.

2260. Do you recommend that?—I do, I am consulted by farmers on that, and I recommend them that constantly.

2261. You said you approved of the horse got by a thoroughbred horse out of a Hackney mare. Have you ever seen the reverse tried?—I have: that horse I spoke of, a horse got by Lord Caledon's "Character" out of "Nancy Quin," was bred that way.

2262. That is the only instance you have seen of that?—Yes; but my reason for recommending that is that the stock take more after their grandsire than they do after their granddam: that is my experience.

2263. That is the grandsire on the sire's side?—Yes; for instance, my horse got by Baliol out of a dark bay mare is a dark bay horse himself, and the majority of his foals are chestnuts with white face and white feet; they have as much quality as if they were got by a thoroughbred horse.

2264. To what do you attribute that?—To Baliol. He was a chestnut horse with white face and white feet, and they are infinitely superior horses when they are that colour, and much better than those that take after their dam's side and are bay or brown horses.

2265. Then you think that the colour follows the characteristics of the animal from which the colour comes?—It does.

2266. You have never arrived at any conclusion as to whether the sire or the ham is most inclined to give action?—By the thoroughbred horse undoubtedly a great deal of the action is got from the dam, but with a bad going thoroughbred horse there are many good harness horses bred when the dam has good action.

2267. Then you think that in very many cases the action in the dam has a great deal to say to it?—It has, undoubtedly.

2268. You said that the best harness horses in your country were bred from mares that were as a rule imported from the south?—I would fancy most of them are.

2269. Do you know how they are bred at all?—I do not.

2270. You imagine they are got by a thoroughbred horse?—I would fancy so, coming from the south. The big farmers go south to buy them themselves, and bring up an exceedingly good mare.

2271. Mr. WRENCH—Is that class No. I?—Yes.

2272. Mr. LA TOUCHE—And you think those mares as a rule are got by a thoroughbred horse?—I would fancy so.

2273. You think they owe their excellence as brood mares very much to the fact that they are got by a thoroughbred horse?—I would not doubt it at all; but then they are out of the right class of mare evidently. That mare is of the right class; if got by a thoroughbred she must be of a good class; not a class of mare that we have as a rule.

2274. Do you know anything about the class of mares in the congested districts, south and west, served by these Hackneys?—I do not know anything.

2275. Do you think the spread of the Hackney strain through the south and west is likely to have any effect on the class of horses farmers buy?—I have no idea of what class of mares are in the south. I am speaking for my own district only.

2276. You cannot give an opinion?—If they are the same class as ours, I don't think it would do the stock any harm. I suppose it would benefit them in a slight way.

2277. Do you think your big farmers would be able to get as good mares in the south if they continued some of the Hackney blood as at present?—I hold that a dash of Hackney blood does some good.

2278. That is your opinion on that subject?—Yes.

2279. Mr. CAREW—Can you name any of the fairs in the south most popular with northern farmers?—They attend nearly all the southern fairs. Our large farmers as well as being breeders are feeders. They go south and fetch eight, ten, and twelve horses annually. They are all off at the fairs now. They buy them, bring them up, and feed them during the winter, and have them ready for March, April, or May. They attend all the fairs in the south.

2280. What do you mean by the south?—South of Dublin.

2281. You would not call the county of Meath south?—No; they don't buy many there.

2282. Skryne, in Meath, would you call that south?—A good many go there. It is a good fair; but they prefer further south—Cahirmee and French Furze.

2283. French Furze, County Kildare?—Yes; that is a popular fair.

2284. What are the fairs in which the congested districts horses go?

MR. WRENCH—He doesn't know.

2285. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything else you wish to tell the Commission?

Witness—I don't think so.

Mr. W. HAMMOND, Ballyarnett House, Londonderry, examined.

2286. CHAIRMAN.—You are a land agent, I believe?—Yes.

2287. How large is the area under your control?—The area that I manage is about 60,000 acres.

2288. What are the chief characteristics of the soil in that district?—A great part of the locality is mountain, and the farms are very small, and all worked by the spade; I don't think in all that locality there is a single plough; the farms are all extremely small and the land generally soft, rather too soft for horse work. In the harrowing in of their seed they don't put a horse as a general rule on the land at all; they cover their oats in with large rakes worked by hand. Of course there are some districts where the land is better—where there is a little more clay; then they can use horses on the land for assisting in the work.

2289. Are there any horses bred down in your district?—Oh yes; I am speaking now particularly regarding the western seaboard of Donegal and of all that district which is called congested.

2290. You have had some considerable experience in horse-breeding?—Yes, for a considerable time in a small way.

2290A. What stallions have you used, and with what results?—In the west of the county of Donegal the stallions were of an inferior description; there were no local stallions at all. There were travelling stallions that came from a distance, and the breeding of these animals was very bad—indeed a kind of mongrel race. I never saw a good stallion coming into Rosses, west of Donegal, to my knowledge. Of course the people took advantage of what they could get, and bred from them to a certain extent, but the produce was never good.

2291. Have you any idea of the breeding of the stallions?—I think there was a good deal of Clydesdale blood in some of the heavy, nondescript, ugly kind of beasts; some of them may have had a little blood in them, but the generality of them were unsuitable to the small mares in the locality. I never saw a stallion I could approve of—that is previous to the last five or six years.

2292. Do you remember a different state of things?—I have known the locality for thirty years, and the breed of horses—or ponies rather—has been seriously degenerating. In days gone by I heard of a good class of ponies called the Rosses ponies, extremely enduring, plenty of life and plenty of go in them; they have died out; I don't think there is a remnant of them remaining.

2293. Have you any idea how they were bred?—I have not been able to find out. This was a small class of ponies. I have been endeavouring to find out where the sire came from, but failed; they were 14·2 high with white legs, white face and white eyes; a better or tougher class of pony could not exist; I had one myself and sold it to a lady who took a fancy to it; it turned out a remarkably good pony; and this lady took it from Ireland to Scotland, to Wales, and to England, until it was done up. I don't know a single good pony of that description at the present time; twenty-five years ago there were a number of them.

2294. You cannot tell how that pony originated?—I cannot tell where the sire came from.

2295. Mr. CAREW.—Is this what you describe as the Rosses' pony?—Yes.

2296. CHAIRMAN.—It was a well-known breed?—It was a breed that everyone knew and everybody appreciated, and they always went at high prices.

2297. You don't know whether they had any cross of Arab or Barb in them at any time?—I cannot say.

2298. Can you give any reason for the deterioration of mares that you speak of in your locality?—The want of good stallions, decidedly; if the breed had been kept up of these ponies by good entires, I believe the race of horses in that part of the country would be respectable in the present time which they are not.

2299. I believe that you and some friends of yours imported a stallion?—Yes, that was the year previous to the Congested Districts Board sending stallions to the country; two friends and myself saw the necessity of getting a good stallion, and one of them who was in England looked out for the most suitable stallion he could pick up, and he purchased this "Little Wenlock" in Norfolk. We brought him over and he stood between Dungloe and Glenties for a season; the produce were not numerous; the people did not seem to appreciate him; some, however, reared good foals and sold them at from £10 to £12 each as foals; that of course was the highest at about eight months old; they didn't all go to that.

2300. What class of stallion do you consider would be best in that locality?—Decidedly the Hackney; I don't know any horse more suitable for the small mares to improve them, give them bone, and spirit and endurance as well. I know no horse better calculated to do it than the Hackney, and the people themselves appreciate the Hackney stallion extremely. I don't think they would exchange him for any other at the present time. I made inquiries from a person that is not very much interested and he wrote to me as follows:—

2301. Is it in answer to a question you asked?—I asked what the people thought of the foals out of the Hackney horse.

2302. Mr. WRENCH.—What district?—Dungloe district. This gentleman writes to me as follows—it is only a sentence from a letter. (Reading) 'Regarding the foals from the Hackney horse they are turning out splendid, but I understand that the first Hackney entire which came here was the best. His produce is now three year old past and they are reckoned the best and most suitable for our district. I have a three-year-old of this breed of horse and he is a grand pony. I purchased him from Mr. James Sweeney. He took first prize at the Horse Show in Dungloe last year, then two years old.'

2303. CHAIRMAN.—Who is that letter from?—Mr. James O'Donnell from Burtonport.

2304. Is that the only stallion the Congested Districts Board have sent?—They send one every year. This was the first, and I think he was there for two seasons.

2305. Mr. WRENCH.—A horse called "Real Gentleman?"—Yes.

2306. The CHAIRMAN.—Have they sent any other class of sire?—All Hackneys; one season they sent an Arab.

2307. What was the name?—"Terassin," the one presented by the Queen.

2308. A Barb has never been sent there?—No, and the Arab was not appreciated at all by the people in comparison with the Hackney.

2309. Was the Arab altogether a well-shaped animal?—Oh, yes; a nice little animal, but too light for the class of mares in that country. I dare say if put to a large-sized mare the produce may have been good, but there are no mares of that class in that country.

2310. You imported "Little Wenlock?"—Yes, with two friends.

2311. What stamp was he?—A small thoroughbred.

2312. Who selected him?—Major Goslin.

2313. And you thought him a good stamp?—He thought he was, but when we saw him we didn't care much about him. I don't think his produce have turned out well.

2314. How did the produce of the Arab turn out?—Very light. I remember seeing one especially, and it was extremely light in the bone; it would just remind you of a deer about the legs. It was very shapely, very neat, and very nice, but no strength in it.

2315. Are there any other stallions in the neighbourhood besides?—I don't know of another stallion in the neighbourhood.

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Mr. W. Hammond.

2316. What would you suggest as a means of improving the mares there?—I would suggest the continuation of the Hackney stallions, and endeavouring to make the people—small farmers—keep their fillies for breeding. Until they do that no permanent improvement can take place. With these old and weedy mares you breed the same thing over and over again, and no matter how good the horse may be the produce will not be good; that is the drawback, and if some inducement was held out to the people to keep their fillies we would have a better class of horses.

2317. You say the farms in your district are worked by spade and hand?—Altogether.

2318. What then do they use the horses for?—Back-loading; some have carts; back-loading, carrying turf and seaweed, and bringing home commodities from the market. Many of them, of course, have no carts, and use creels on the horse's back.

2319. You don't require a large animal for that?—No, a large animal would be out of place there. Their farms would not feed them. They don't take the most particular care of their horses in that locality, and if you give them a large highly bred horse they cannot feed them.

2320. Do you consider the Hackney strong?—Yes, a most endurable animal. I had one myself, a mare, that I used for eighteen years, and a finer animal could not exist. She had action, splendid constitution, and a spirit up to anything. I used to drive that mare forty miles in a day, and she would come home as fresh as she went out.

2321. Have you any experience of Welsh ponies?—I had one at one time, small, 13.2, but a fine little animal with splendid action, and I bred from it.

2322. Had he bone and substance?—Plenty; it was a mare; I bred from a small chestnut half-bred. I had two foals, and she ceased then to breed.

2323. I meant the stallion—what was the half-bred stallion?—A small entire, bred from a horse called Fox Hunter, by a country mare. It was the most suitable I could get at the time to put this pony to, and she bred twice.

2324. The sire was of the pony class?—Yes.

2325. And they grew well under 14?—13.3 probably would be the height of them, they were both the same size but different in appearance and action. One had the action of the dam, which was a high, beautiful action, and the other quite the reverse, although full brother and sister, but both were game and both good goers, the mare probably the most enduring of the two.

2326. Do you think a stallion of the Welsh stamp, the cob, would be a good cross with the Rosses pony?—If he were large enough, but anything under 15 hands would be small to put to the mares in that locality to improve their height and their bodies altogether.

2327. What is the usual height of the Rosses pony?—14.2.

2328. Do you wish them higher than that for pannier work?—They might be up to 15. Then it would not alone give the people an opportunity of doing their work but they would sell better; these people look out for a good sale, and if they get a good price they will sell; it is a matter of money altogether with them.

2329. Mr. La Touche—Have you lived some time in the county of Donegal?—28 or 30 years in the West.

2330. And in that time do you think the class of ponies has improved?—On the contrary, I think it has degenerated very much.

2331. You spoke of a pony with white eyes and white legs, a good hardy pony?—Yes.

2332. That was when you first came to the district?—Yes.

2333. That has disappeared?—Yes, it has. I think one of the last I had myself, and that was fancied by a lady to whom I sold it

2334. What sort of sire used the people to use when you first went to the district?—These nondescript ponies that used to travel the country.

2335. These white-eyed class?—No; I have no means of finding out where they came from.

2336. At any rate the ponies of 20 or 30 years ago were better?—Undoubtedly, far better.

2337. What became of "Little Wenlock"?—Of course when the Congested Districts Board sent down their entire everyone went to him, and "Little Wenlock" had nothing to do. He was given to a gentleman in Stranorlar, where there are larger mares and which is a better district, and last season he broke one of his legs and was shot.

2338. I suppose when the Congested Districts Board stallions came they got all the work?—Altogether.

2339. Was the fee that the Congested Districts Board charged much lower?—Oh, yes.

2340. Considerably lower?—Yes, considerably lower.

2341. I suppose these nondescript ponies didn't charge more than five shillings?—They did not.

2342. But the Congested Districts Board's fee is five shillings?—Yes; but the people would prefer to get a good horse at 5*s.* than a bad one.

2343. Then it is not on account of the lowness of the fee, but on account of the excellence of the horse?—Yes; they would take the Hackney in preference to the nondescript at the same figure.

2344. What you mean to say is that the Congested Districts Board's horse has got the custom from its superiority, and not through its comparative lowness of fee?—No; the people appreciate the Hackney, and would rather have him at a higher fee.

2345. Do you think the people understand the requirements of horse-breeding?—I think the people know what suits themselves remarkably well.

2346. But they have allowed their horses to deteriorate for twenty or thirty years?—But they have had no good stallions that would have kept up the breed.

2347. You think they had facilities twenty or thirty years ago that they have not had since?—There was a better class of pony.

2348. How do you account for the good class disappearing?—It was not the fault of the people. No person in that part of the country could afford to bring an entire. The people were too poor, and the landlords or others were not inclined to do anything in the way.

2349. Do you think they could afford it better twenty or thirty years ago?—I don't see very much change for the worse, so far as the circumstances of the people are concerned.

2350. What I want to get at is how you account for the people allowing their horses to deteriorate so much in twenty or thirty years?—It was not their fault. If they had had good entires coming to the country they would have taken advantage of them.

2351. But previous to this they must have had these good sires?—Very much better.

2352. And they must have been brought in by the people?—I have been unable to find where they came from.

2353. These very people who allowed the breed to deteriorate in twenty or thirty years are now highly appreciative of the Hackney horse?—Certainly.

2354. You thought it would be advisable to use a bigger horse than the Welsh cob as a stallion?—I think so. I don't know the size of an average Welsh cob, but anything less than 15 hands would be small.

2355. Do you think it would be advisable to breed an animal more than 14.2 in the Rosses?—I would say up to 15. The 15 hands horse will go in the market something more than the 14.2.

2356. Can they rear that?—Yes, owing to the hardy breed the Hackney is. I consider him hardier than the thoroughbred, and more easily reared. He

has a kindly disposition, and is easily broken in in comparison to the thoroughbred. The people there generally break in their own horses, and if they have a stubborn one they can do nothing with it—they spoil them, in fact.

2357. Your experience is that the Hackney is easier reared than the half-bred thoroughbred?—Yes.

2358. You have had experience of both?—I have had a little experience, but not as much of the Hackney as I would wish. This grey mare that I spoke about was a Hackney. I took the trouble to send her to Armagh to try to breed from her.

2359. Was she a thoroughbred Hackney?—Yes.

2360. Did you buy her in England?—I bought her from a dealer in Ireland, and I sent her to a thoroughbred Hackney from Norfolk belonging to the Rev. Mr. Johnston, of Richhill—"Broadacre" he was called. She was, unfortunately, too old, and would not breed.

2361. Was she in the stud-book?—She was not.

2362. Are you quite certain she was a thoroughbred?—I believe she was, from what I know myself, and from what others said, and from her appearance.

2363. You only went by personal appearance?—Yes, personal appearance. I had no record of what she was.

2364. There is a great deal of posting work in the county of Donegal?—Yes, a good deal at Burtonport, Doochary, Dungloe, and Gweedore.

2365. There is a great deal of cart work?—A great deal of posting.

2366. What are the animals that are used?—Animals which are generally purchased in fairs outside the district. For posting purposes and for heavy carting purposes, they generally go to Strabane, Raphoe, or Milford to buy suitable horses.

2367. Are there any reared in the Rosses?—They are all too small and unsuitable for work of that description.

2368. And you think with a cross of a Hackeny stallion you can breed the best horses?—Yes, if you can breed them up to fifteen hands they would be very fair post horses.

2369. As a matter of fact have you any idea how the present horses are bred?—I could not say.

2370. But they have no appearance of being highly bred?—I consider they are bred from the country mares, larger and heavier than in the Rosses, and probably off half-bred stallions.

2371. And you think that for general hardihood and usefulness that the Hackney stallion is superior to any other?—I do for that locality.

2372. What advantage do you think the Hackney has over the horse that is got by the thoroughbred horse out of mares themselves got by thoroughbred horses?—I think he is a more compact animal. I think he is stronger in the bone, with any amount of spirit, a showy horse, and a more enduring horse. I think these are qualities that you could not beat in the half-bred.

2373. Showyness of spirit is not an essential quality for carrying creels up a mountain?—It is an essential with those people who want to sell them.

2374. You think he would be more saleable?—Yes, I think so; if they have got a horse they can get good money for, they won't put a creel on his back.

2375. They sell them as foals?—Yes, but latterly they are anxious to hold on a little longer in order that they may get a better price.

2376. How do they keep them in the winter?—They house them at night, and allow them to run out in the day.

2377. This would be the bigger farmers?—And the smaller ones, too, give them a little hay and mash during the night. It takes a hardy horse to live and succeed under those circumstances, especially with the small farmers.

2378. Have you any reason to say that horses got by a Hackney stallion are more capable of bearing these risks and troubles than horses got by a thoroughbred out of a half-bred mare?—No, because our experience is recent.

2379. Are there any other thoroughbred horses in that district?—None, except the one I mentioned.

2380. Where did he stand?—Dungloe and Glenties.

2381. Did you find his stock were liable to die in winter?—No, I didn't hear that any of them did.

2382. They were able to subsist during the winter?—Yes; they would not keep up the same condition in the winter as the produce of the Hackney; they are thinner in the skin and thinner in the hair.

2383. Do you think that the Hackney has got more bone?—Yes, certainly.

2384. And why do you think so? If the Hackney measures eight inches below the knee, and the thoroughbred measures eight inches, why do you say that the Hackney has more bone?—I am not acquainted with those large thoroughbreds; I never measured them, but from appearance it is obvious that the Hackney is the strongest; I think that is generally admitted.

2385. I have not seen many Hackneys myself, but it isn't my experience of the ones I have seen. You think that the Hackney would import more bone?—Yes.

2386. Than any thoroughbred you know?—Yes.

2387. Mr. CAREW.—You have no experience except the one you own yourself for eighteen years, which you didn't know was a Hackney?—That is so.

2388. The Hackneys in your district have yet to prove themselves?—Yes.

2389. Mr. WRENCH—Do you know anything of the Welsh cob—Do you know the most of them of the best quality are largely crossed with Hackney blood? No, I am not aware.

2390. You don't know anything about the breeding of Welsh cobs?—No, I do not.

2391. And you think if any horse is supplied in these districts to satisfy the people and meet the requirements which exist, that there is nothing more suitable than the Hackney?—I would; I know the people of the district are well satisfied with the Hackney as an entire.

2392. Do you know if they have sold the produce at higher prices than they sold the produce of the mongrels?—Yes, at eight or nine months old up to £12.

2393. Is that the produce of the Hackney?—Yes.

2394. Is that much higher than before?—I never knew them to get more than £5 heretofore, and sometimes they sold for half that price. I remember some being sold for £1.

2395. And in spite of that horses have been selling badly for the last few years?—Very badly.

2396. Don't they also require horses they can use at an early age?—Yes.

2397. Two years old?—Yes, they put them into work when they are two years old.

2398. And work them from that on?—Yes.

2399. Is horse-breeding a considerable industry amongst the people in that district?—It is, because during the time the mare is rearing the foal they work her and work her up to the very day she foals.

2400. And she is a considerable source of income?—Yes.

2401. You would not agree to any recommendation that these people should not be allowed to breed?—I think it would be a great hardship, but I would do everything to advise them to improve their breeding mares, that is a thing the Congested Districts Board will very soon have to look into and to try and find some remedy why the people should keep the fillies and get rid of the old mares.

2402. Have you any suggestion to offer?—I was thinking if the Board charged a higher figure for service to the old mares, and gave the young ones a

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service free; it is a small thing that will induce these people to do what will turn to their advantage in the end; it is a thing that might be considered.

2403. You would make a difference in the service fee between the young and old mares?—The old worn out mare I would not give her any service at all, and the young filly bred from a Hackney I would give her service free.

2404. Do you think the land is good enough to encourage people to breed from their fillies at two years old:—I think it stints the growth of the animal, and I don't see how she can feed the foal as well at three years old as four.

2405. You think it better they should not be encouraged to breed until three years old?—I think so.

2406. I think you said that the sire must be on the large side?—Yes.

2407. On the larger side as compared with their mares?—Yes.

2408. Have you a clear recollection of any of the nondescript stallions in the district before the Congested Districts Board sent their stallions?—I have a recollection of two.

2409. Can you describe them—a coarse blooded small carty?—One was a half-bred; he was kept by a person of the name of Philips; he used to ride and drive him; he was a black horse with lanky legs and slight body.

2410. What kind of stock did he produce?—Very inferior. I remember another, a black horse, that they charged half-crown for the service of; he was an unfortunate brute hardly able to draw a cart; he was not sound.

2411. Then practically the stallions were of the worst description?—The worst description, and that has been the great draw-back to horse-breeding in that part of the country.

2412. And I think before the Board took any steps they asked you and a good many people down there for information?—They sent a list of queries to people who had the interest of the district at heart, and who are well acquainted with the locality.

2413. You know the whole of their district?—The whole of the congested district and a large part of the county as well.

2414. CHAIRMAN—Was it not in order to get size that the big sires were used in your locality, with the result that the sharp little ponies disappeared?—Yes.

2415. It was in order to get size that they used this large size of nondescript breed?—Well, they had no others; they could not afford to go long distances, and took the advantage of those that came through the country to fairs and markets.

2416. But was it in order to get size?—It was in order to get a foal of some sort.

2417. Would it be possible to breed polo ponies in your district?—I believe it would. I believe that now the old race of animals is gone, and that they breed from the Hackneys, I believe they could be bred.

2418. You say you want a good size?—Certainly.

2419. In order to breed polo ponies you want to breed an animal not above 14.2?—Yes.

2420.—It would be of more advantage to the farmers to breed polo ponies?—It would, if they could do it.

2421. Don't you consider a Barb or Arab or small thoroughbred, would be more likely to get the sharp polo pony?—You must improve the mare before you do anything; the Hackney stallion is the only animal that I am aware of that will improve the breed; when it is improved you might use other entires to advantage.

2422. Are you not afraid that you will get your mares too large with the Hackneys?—You might for polo ponies certainly, but the largest sized mares now would not be higher than 14.2, and they are down to 13.2.

2423. Mr. WRENCH—Is it not a fact that a large number of farmers there sell their foals as foals?—Yes.

2427. Are not the foals got by Arabs and Barbs and some thoroughbreds much smaller than those got by Hackneys? They would sell at a smaller price?—Yes.

2428. And is it not a fact that most of the polo ponies that produce good prices only produce these prices when trained?—Yes.

2429. And they don't bring the profit so much to the breeder?—No. It might turn out a first-class polo pony or not; but they would never test it.

2430. In those fairs where these people sell their stock is not action a great advantage?—The poorest man in the country will look to action; it is one of the things that pays best.

2431. CHAIRMAN.—In former days are you aware what price they got for their ponies—the good ponies that you speak of as the Rosses breed?—I cannot answer that question definitely.

2432. I suppose they were sold as foals?—Yes; the same system existed then as at the present time. They then sold them as foals. Some by necessity; some expecting to make money kept them a little longer; some kept them on and bred from them.

2433. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Do you know what became of these ponies that were bred in the Rosses and sold in the fairs of Dungloe and Glenties?—Strangers came from Donegal, Strabane, Stranorlar, and other places, and purchased them and took them away.

2434. Used one man buy a hank of them?—A man would buy two or three of them at a time; but mostly they were picked up individually.

2435. One man would buy the one foal?—Yes, and take it away and either keep it or sell it.

2436. Is it in your knowledge that they grow bigger when they get down into a good country than if kept up there?—I should say so.

2437. That the foal that would probably attain a size of 14·1 or 14·2 in the Rosses would grow to 15 hands in another place—the county of Cavan, for instance, or somewhere else?—It might; but I have had no experience, and cannot give any examples.

2438. Colonel ST. QUINTIN—There is just one question I should like to ask you—whether or not there has been any industry up there in the way of mule-breeding?—No.

2439. They don't breed mules?—No.

2440. They never try?—No.

2441. Are there many mules in that country?—I only know one.

2442. I suppose there are plenty of donkeys?—Oh, yes. There was a Spanish ass there one season; the Congested Districts Board sent him down.

2443. What class are the donkeys; big or small?—Very small; rather diminutive, but extremely useful.

2444. Don't you think they might grow mules there?—Yes, I think so. At the time the Congested Districts Board sent the Spanish ass I was anxious they should try him for mules, and he was let to no mares.

2445. By mules I mean jennets as well?—Yes, they are both useful, and, no doubt, would serve a poor country like that. They are easily kept, and, if good, they are of great value.

2446. Mr. WRENCH—Have you any experience as to whether they sell as well as the produce of the Hackney?—No, certainly not. They cannot be as profitable; but for the use of the poor man they are just as valuable; but certainly not for selling. Therefore, I think the people would not take to breeding them as much as ponies.

2447. CHAIRMAN.—What is the highest price you have heard paid for a mule?—My experience is very limited; I think the mule I refer to, the man must have got her for £5 or £6.

2448. Would it surprise you to hear that as much as £40 has been given for a good mule?—Some of these mules are 16 hands high, and I have no doubt a mule of that description would be worth £40.

2449. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Don't you think that if good mules were bred that they would fetch a remunerative price?—Yes, but I have had no experience.

2450. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—The Congested Districts Board's stallions have been standing for three years and four years?—Yes, four years; the oldest of the foals are three years old past.

2451. And the ordinary price of foals has immediately increased?—Yes, certainly.

2452. And has that increase been maintained?—I think it has; they appear more anxious now to keep the produce a little longer than heretofore. *Nov.* 18, 1896. Mr. W. Hammond.

2453. Is it because they are more anxious to keep or that they find a difficulty in selling?—They find no difficulty in selling but find a prospect of making more money if they keep them to three or four years old.

2454. There must be some hundreds sold as foals every year?—I should say so.

2455. And these hundreds still fetch a considerable enhanced price?—They certainly do.

2456. Three years are the oldest?—Yes.

2457. You have not had much opportunity of testing their qualities as yet?—No, we have not as yet.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

SIXTH DAY.—THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH, 1896.

Nov. 19, 1896

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD RATHDONNELL, LORD ASHTOWN, Mr. F. S. WRENCH; Mr. J. L. CAREW; SIR T. H. G. ESMONDE, M.P.; and COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. E. M. ARCHDALE, D.L., Ballinamallard, Co. Fermanagh, examined.

Mr. E. M. Archdale, D.L.

2458. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Archdale, you are, I think, Deputy Lieutenant of the Co. Fermanagh?—Yes, my lord.

2459. And you are engaged in farming in that county?—Yes. I am, I suppose one of the largest farmers in Ulster, I fancy.

2460. Is the district you live in a large horse-breeding district?—They breed a great many horses; nearly every small farmer produces something or other.

2461. For their own use?—For sale entirely.

2462. What are the characteristics of your district, do you consider it suitable for horse breeding?—Only part of it is.

2463. What kind of soil is it?—About half of the county is limestone and the rest of it is mixed with a boggy, moory sort of land and stiffish clay, but it is red sandstone a good deal of it.

2464. You breed horses yourself?—I do a good many.

2465. Largely?—Yes; ten or eleven foals every year I breed.

2466. Have you a stallion of your own?—Yes.

2467. How many?—At present I have one Hackney and one Clydesdale.

2468. And have you been breeding horses for a length of time?—I had a thoroughbred stallion for about fifteen years, and I have been breeding for the last sixteen or seventeen years.

2469. How long have you had the Hackney and the Clydesdale?—I have always had the Clydesdale; I got the Hackney about five or six years ago.

2470. You had the Clydesdale the same time as the thoroughbred?—Yes.

2471. What kind of mares did you put your thoroughbred and your Clydesdale to?—They were both let to make money, and they were both let to the country. With regards to my own mares I only put the Clydesdale to the farm mares to breed farm horses, but the country people having a light mare would put the Clydesdale to her to increase the size.

2472. What did you charge for the thoroughbred?—Three guineas for half-bred horses; that was the usual charge; sometimes I would put it at four guineas, but three guineas was the usual fee.

2473. And for the Clydesdale?—One pound.

2474. Could you say which are most generally preferred?—I think the Clydesdale as a rule got the most custom. I had one thoroughbred horse, "Forlorn Hope," for about ten years, and he used to get a good many mares. But so many more thoroughbred horses came into the country that they divided the custom a good deal.

2475. And the farmers who used the Clydesdale, did they breed for their own purposes or for sale?—For sale, a number of them breed for sale; they use them themselves when they are two year olds and they sell them when they are four year olds.

2476. Where do they sell the produce, at the fairs?—They sold nearly all at the fairs.

2477. Where did they go to?—If a well bred mare it went as a hunter, most likely they used to sell her at the Moy fair, and pull the hair off the legs.

2478. Did most of them go out of the country or go to other parts of Ireland?—I think the majority go out of the country. I dare say the majority go for tram horses and for troopers.

2479. You had a Hackney stallion for a year, you say?—Five years.

2480. Have you bred from that stallion yourself?—Yes, I am driving Hackneys the produce from it now at home myself.

2481. Out of what kind of mares?—Pure bred Hackneys; pedigree Hackney.

2482. What is your opinion of them?—I think they are most suitable—I think they are a very good style of horse for the country.

2483. For driving?—Yes, driving. I am going to breed from a thoroughbred mare to try the effect of the cross. I am using a Hackney mare on the farm also and it is one of the best farm horses I have. The young horses from the Hackney by the country mares are very saleable I find.

2484. What do you charge for the Hackney?—£2 10*s.* 0*d.*

2485. Well, in your opinion is the Hackney calculated to produce a more saleable horse than the thoroughbred?—Yes, much more I think.

2486. I mean a thoroughbred with good bone and substance?—I think with the mares in our country much more. They are a weedy class of mare as a rule, light in the bone.

2487. You think them more likely to acquire bone and substance from the Hackney sire than from the ordinary thoroughbred sire?—I think so as far as my experience goes.

2488. Are many horses in your district sold as

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Mr. E. M. Archdale, D.L.

hunters?—I have sold a great many myself but I am sure some other ones were also sold. I don't know the future of any others except my own. I sold to a Captain Beatty, at Tarporly, Rugby, for many years, and a great many of mine have gone to Cheshire. I won the Enniskillen Hunt Cup five times out of eight starts by horses bred by myself which were sold as hunters.

2489. How were they bred?—By a thoroughbred horse out of a well-bred mare.

2490. Would you call your district a hunter producing district?—No, not a hunter producing district. There is no sale for hunters there. They have to come to this country for hunters. The dealers get the hunters down here and they make the principal profit.

2491. Have you any opinion yourself as to what effect the introducing of Hackney blood would be likely to have upon the trade in Irish hunters generally throughout the country?—I think it would do it good. I think it would give bone and soundness, and do away with a lot of the soft crosses they are getting from the Clydesdales at present.

2492. I think you said, in answer to a question, that the mares have improved in your district?—Yes; I think they are improving. I think the Royal Dublin Scheme is improving them. The prizes are tempting them to keep on the mares, instead of selling them as two-year olds.

2493. Do you attribute the improvement entirely to that cause or to any other causes?—Entirely to that cause, and to the people taking a little more interest in breeding and in soundness principally. As a rule, the mare that is fit for nothing else is put to breed down in our country—spavined, or no matter what ails her.

2494. I think you said that you have bred out of a thoroughbred mare and your own Hackney stallion?—Yes, I have; but the produce is only two years old at present.

2495. And from half-bred mares, too?—Yes; and from half-bred mares and from pedigree Hackney mares.

2496. That is for sale?—Yes; they are four year olds, the oldest of mine. I am driving four year olds, but I have not tried to sell any yet. They do not sell well until they are five year olds down in our part.

2497. Not until five?—That is the time to get the best price, if you can keep them until then.

2498. Can you compare at all the prices you get for the stock of the Hackney stallion and the stock of the thoroughbred stallion?—I have not sold any yet; but two farmers, who sold a four-year-old mare and horse, got better prices they told me. They told me they were well satisfied. They got £52 10*s.* at Moy fair, in May last, and a dealer called Hothersall gave £5 profit in half-an-hour; another man got £70 for a three-year-old off my horse—a man called Bell. That was much more than they could have got before.

2499. Are there many high-class harness horses bred in your district?—There have been a great many horses bred; very good racehorses.

2450. I am asking about harness horses?—Yes; I think a good many good horses.

2451. At what age would they be sold to the dealers?—They would be sold at four by the biggest farmers. The small farmers sell them coming two.

2452. What price would they fetch?—£60 and £70.

2453. Do you think that the dealers would prefer harness horses got by a Hackney to harness horses got by a thoroughbred?—If they could get a harness horse by a thoroughbred with fair action I dare say they would prefer it.

2454. In your district is the harness horse a profitable kind to breed?—Yes, I think so. I think it is the most useful for the district. I have sold harness horses by a thoroughbred to Glasgow dealers, and I got about £60 or £70 for four-year-olds. I sold several over there.

2455. You said, in answer to a question sent to you, that the number of persons who benefited by the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme was small because they are obliged to use only registered stallions?—Yes; I am on the County Committee of the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme. We have never been able to get mares enough for the prizes. During the whole time the Dublin Scheme has been in operation in Fermanagh we have never been able to use the whole of the money. We never got mares enough.

2456. How do you account for that?—They don't care to go to the stallion in order to get prizes. They require a different class to the Dublin horse, and they would prefer to go to another horse, pay more, and lose the prize, than go to the Dublin horse.

2457. You think they ought to be allowed to choose their own stallion?—That is my own opinion. I think all suitable stallions, of whatever breed, so long as they are pure-bred, should be registered, and men allowed to go to them to select their own stallion.

2458. Do you think that stallions other than thoroughbred ought to be registered?—I think so.

2459. Half-bred stallions?—No; I don't approve of half-bred.

2460. You mean pure-bred?—Stallions belonging to some recognized stud-book.

2461. But not any half-breds?—No. I am opposed to half-breds, and the majority of the stallions in the County Fermanagh are half-bred now—those that are travelling.

2462. Have you any idea of the number of stallions in the county?—I have no idea. I saw Captain Tuthill gave evidence about it; I do not know the number.

2463. Are there many thoroughbred stallions about your own place?—There are. A man called Mitchell has got three, Sir Douglas Brooke one. I think there are about four or five in the county now.

2464. Is the farmer very much influenced by the question of price in selecting a stallion?—Very much. Price and proximity are the two principal things, I think—that is, with the small class of farmers, who are the principal breeders.

2465. And the larger class of farmer—the man who can afford to pay?—If he sees a suitable stallion he will send to it.

2466. But in the case of the small farmer the price is a great object to him?—Very great—very.

2467. Are you in a position to give any opinion, prices being equal, what kind of stallion they would select?—I think, now, they would go to the Hackney stallion if they got him. I think the Hackney stallion is the favourite class of stallion in the county at the present time. I am getting mares from men who own thoroughbred and half-bred stallions. They are sending them to my Hackney, instead of giving them to their own horse for nothing at all.

2468. Was there any Hackney in your county before yours?—Mine was the first.

2469. You have had experience of the locality for the last five years—do you think they would prefer a Hackney sire to a sound thoroughbred sire, the fees being equal?—Yes; I think so, undoubtedly.

2470. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—A great many of the horses sold to the big carriage horse dealers average, you say, from £60 to £70 and £80?—£60 to £70, I said.

2371. How were those horses you speak of got?—Some by thoroughbred and the majority by half-bred Clydesdales. I have known them sell a stallion that was got by my own thoroughbred horse out of a Clydesdale mare, and I have known the produce got by that horse go for £60 or £70 to these dealers at the Moy.

2472. What class of carriage horse was that?—Sixteen hands high.

2473. Showing quality?—Showing a wonderful lot of quality considering his sire. The mare must have been a light well-bred mare. It showed a

wonderful lot of quality. I saw one horse I remember quite well.

2474. You also told us that there had been gentlemen who owned thoroughbred and half-bred stallions who had been sending to your Hackney stallion—that was only a short time ago?—This year.

2475. That, I should imagine, was an experiment?—Yes, they saw good colts by the Hackney stallion near them in sound condition and better than what they could breed themselves. I imagine that.

2476. It is not from any proved intrinsic value?—No.

2477. You also said that the people in the district object to go to the Royal Dublin Society's stallion?—Yes.

2478. Why is that?—I don't know. We are very hard put to it to get enough of mares this year. After a lot of bother we got the Dublin Society to give consent to our giving a £10 prize, which is more than the rules allow. We gave that in order to try and induce more mares to come.

2479. What was the objection to these stallions?—I fancy they think the foals do not prove so profitable to them.

2480. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say the mares in your district have improved. Are they bred or bought?—A good many have been bought. Some mares have been bought in the south since the Society began to give prizes. Our farmers get mares in the south, feed them until they become four and five-year-olds, and then sell them to the London dealers.

2481. I am referring chiefly to mares?—They keep some of the mares when they get good prizes, they keep some of them in order to try and get a prize, they then sell them afterwards.

2482. Do you find that the sound foals are picked up by the dealers, and the unsound ones left in the county as a rule?—Very much so; it is doing the greatest damage to our horses I think.

2483. Have you any scheme in your mind as to how that could be stopped, as to how the sound mares could be kept?—I have often thought on that, but I have no cure for it except only of course the prizes. They do to a certain extent make a difference, as the mares must be sound in order to obtain a prize.

2484. What thoroughbreds are in your district?—Hilarious, the winner of the Cesarewitch, Cambrian, Chelwood, and Garland was there, but he has gone this year.

2485. How far apart are they, are they "get-at-able" to the ordinary farmer?—Well, they are away from him as a rule. Hilarious and Cambria are near Enniskillen. Mitchell, the owner, travels his horses, and there is "Scotch Monk" close to Enniskillen. There are a great many close to Enniskillen, but none in the other parts of the county.

2486. You mentioned about the half-bred sires in your district. What do you mean by half-bred sires?—I mean a sire got how I could not tell; it is not a Clydesdale, a Shire, nor a thoroughbred; it is nearly always got by a thoroughbred from a heavy cart mare which they think gives bone.

2487. Where do those heavy cart mares come from, not bought from dealers?—No, they were in the county as a rule.

2488. How are they crossed?—They are bred by a Clydesdale sire on a county mare.

2489. What do you mean by a county mare?—A light mare 15·1 or 15·2, no bone and bad shoulders.

2490. Is it your opinion that they have gone to the Clydesdale to get bone?—Yes, that is what they do invariably. They have a good mare, and they come to me to know which horse they would put her to. They always neglect the thoroughbred. They state the mare is too light, and that they want a produce with bone; they want a little more size.

2491. Is it your opinion as regards bone, that the Clydesdales, Shires and Clevelands, although bigger to look at, the bone is much more porous and more inclined to fly?—Yes. I do not agree with the theory at all that the Clydesdale and Shire will give bone. I think they spoil the bone.

2492. You don't like the Clydesdale cross?—I don't like any cart cross in a mare except for farm work.

2493. I think you knew a horse called "Forlorn Hope"?—I owned him for many years.

2494. Was he a thoroughbred?—He was bought as a thoroughbred, he was bought from Blenkiron, but Weatherby would not put him in the book; he was supposed to be by Citadel out of I Dare by Uncle Ned.

2495. He was not in the Stud book?—He was not; he was for some time; but Weatherby could not verify his pedigree after Mr. B——— died.

2496. You knew a horse called "Revenge"?—Yes, well.

2497. Was he a thoroughbred?—He was in the same sort of way I believe really a thoroughbred, but yet not a thoroughbred.

2498. He was a half-bred?—I should not call those horses half-bred.

2499. He had a stain?—Yes.

2500. Would you object yourself to horses which have stains of that kind?—I should be very glad to get them to use.

2501. You think a half-bred stallion of breeding bone and substance would be acceptable to the people in your district?—A half-bred stallion like "Revenge" would be acceptable. No one would look upon him as a half-bred.

2502. If he is not in the Stud Book he must be a half-bred?—I mean to say the people would not look upon him as half-bred.

2503. If a half-bred of that description, approved of by some competent Board, registered in fact, was to stand in the same locality as a Clydesdale, or a Hackney, or a Cleveland, or a cart horse, and serve mares at the same fee, to which stallion would the farmers in your district send their mares?—At the present time they would go to the Hackney. I think it would be a close run between the Hackney and a stallion like that if they got to know his stock. I had a thoroughbred stallion "Dethroned;" he was the winner of a good many races. The farmers at first sight did not care about him, he being rather high in the legs. But his produce turned out so well that he was very acceptable afterwards.

2504. Do Messrs. East and Wimbush, and large dealers like them buy many horses in your district?—They do not come near us. All the good horses go to Moy fair.

2505. They spend a great deal of money in this country?—Yes, a great deal,

2506. If Messrs. East and Wimbush were to state that they dislike the cross of the Hackney would you still be inclined to use the Hackney?—Yes, because I don't think they have the least notion what the horses are got by that they get.

2507. But if they knew that the Hackney stallion cross had been used do you think there would be any danger of their leaving their money away from you?—I think not a bit; if they got a suitable horse they would buy it no matter what it was got by; even if got by a Clydesdale to their knowledge, if it looked good enough they would buy it.

2508. Mr. CAREW—You said you sold some horses yourself in Glasgow for £60 or £70. Was that recently?—About four years ago.

2509. They were not by Hackneys?—No, by a thoroughbred, by "Forlorn Hope."

2510. What age?—Four-year-olds.

2511. Do you think you can improve on the price by the produce out of the Hackney?—I hope to, with some I have got now, two-year-olds coming three—three-year-olds in fact they are.

2512. You said that as between the Hackney and

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the thoroughbred if the thoroughbred had high action you would prefer it?—I would prefer it, but when I speak of the benefit of the Hackney cross I do not speak of my own mares so much; my own are good sound mares with plenty of breeding.

2513. With that qualification you would prefer the thoroughbred?—Yes.

2514. If the mares in the country were like yours you would prefer the thoroughbred?—I think the Hackney would bring plenty of good stock, but that the thoroughbred would bring still better. I have been driving thoroughbreds and Hackneys for about six years. They talk about the staying powers of the Hackneys. I drive one thirty miles and never touch her with the whip, that is the pedigree Hackney mare that I have been breeding on at the same time.

2515. You said you think the introduction of Hackney blood throughout the country would improve the breeding and substance?—I would like to qualify that. I would not like to introduce the Hackney into Meath or Kildare, or any hunting district at all. I would keep it in parts like our county where they have small, light mares unfit to produce big mares.

2516. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Your county, is not that class of county that you could breed mules?—No, we are not the congested part at all.

2517. Mr. WRENCH.—I think in addition to being on the County Committee of the Royal Dublin Society you are also on the Horse-breeding Committee of the Dublin Society?—Yes, I am.

2518. I think you are also the practical manager of the Enniskillen Farming Society, that you have managed the County Society for many years?—Yes, I have been secretary for fifteen years.

2519. And you were master of the Fermanagh Harriers?—Yes, I was about five years master.

2520. So that you have exceptional opportunities of knowing the farmers and the horse-breeding in the district?—I don't think any one knows the farmers in Fermanagh better than I do.

2521. You have mentioned you had a horse called "Forlorn Hope"?—Yes.

2522. Was he not a horse with exceptional bone below the knee?—Yes, very good bone.

2523. Did he not measure nearly 9 inches?—Yes, within one-eighth of an inch of 9 inches. He measured over 8¾.

2524. Below the knee?—Yes.

2525. A big upstanding horse?—Yes, a horse 16.1.

2526. Therefore you had experience of breeding from the type of thoroughbred you recommend?—Yes, my father bought him specially for that purpose from Blenkiron.

2527. Do you think a thoroughbred horse is calculated to produce action with the same certainty as a Hackney stallion?—I am afraid not. I have never found that he could.

2528. You think the Hackney produce has better action than any thoroughbred?—Yes, undoubtedly.

2529. Have you had any experience of the West of Ireland—Donegal or any of those remote districts?—I know the west of Donegal very well—Ardara, Killybegs, and all that part from Bundoran to North Leitrim.

2530. You have been around the west coast, and know the west coast of Donegal?—I know it very well indeed.

2531. Do you know the class of mares that they have in that district?—Small, light, well-bred mares, about 14½ or 15 at the most, down to 14.

2532. What horse do you think best calculated to cross with these mares?—I think no other horse but the Hackney would get a good stock out of them.

2533. Do you think that the people there want their mares to develop into a stronger and more suitable class of mare?—Undoubtedly.

2534. You think that also applies to Fermanagh?—I think to a great many parts of Fermanagh. The mares in Fermanagh want bone. I don't like their practice of increasing the bone with the Clydesdale, which they want to do. I think the Hackney will put the Clydesdale cross out of it.

2535. You don't consider that there is anything in this allegation that Hackneys are soft?—My experience is that they are quite the reverse. They are wonderful stayers, as far as I have found.

2536. Do you know how they are bred, if there is anything in their breeding that can give any force to that statement?—I think the origin of the Hackney—a thoroughbred cross on an old nag horse—ought to make them hard, and they are very particular in all the stud books to keep the cart cross out of it.

2537. You think that there is a considerable crossing of the cart horse in Ireland now on the mares of the country?—There is a tremendous crossing in Fermanagh of the cart horse with the mares. Many more are served by cart horses than by any other sort. Ten times as many are served by cart horses than by any other particular horses.

2538. We have heard the old Irish mare spoken of. Are you of opinion that there is any particular type of Irish mares still existing?—They are not in our country. I saw the mare described, but I never saw one in my life.

2539. Was not your father a large breeder before you?—Yes, a large breeder, and he used to judge at shows in Dublin and in England and elsewhere, horses and hunters.

2540. If there were any mares of that sort, he would be likely to have had them?—I fancy so.

2541. His mares were especially good?—They were very good mares.

2542. When you are carrying out any scheme with public money to improve the breed of horses in a district, do you think that the people themselves ought to be consulted?—Well, I think they ought to be consulted to a certain extent. I think they know perfectly well themselves what they would get sale for. There is no good in driving them against common sense. There is no use in making them breed what they cannot sell.

2543. Do you think they would know the type of horse they would want?—Most certainly.

2544. Would you agree with the opinion that the small farmers, say of £20 valuation, should not be allowed to breed horses?—No, I should not, because that would put half the horses in Ireland out of the country.

2545. Is not the breeding of horses a source of considerable profit to a great many men of that description?—Yes, they do not have idle mares; they work them out until near foaling, and it does them no harm.

2546. Would you register any so-called half-bred horses?—No, I would not.

2547. In addition to the horses that you mentioned as having been bred in Fermanagh, have many high class race horses been bred in Fermanagh?—Yes, the best horses in England at the present time have been bred in Fermanagh, Red Heart, Tintagel, La Fiancée, Glenvannon, are all bred in Fermanagh.

2548. Therefore it is a county that can breed good horses?—It can breed good horses.

2549. And your opinion of the breeding of hunters is that hunters always ought to be got by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, I should certainly think so.

2550. Supposing that Hackney blood did spread, we will say from the West of Ireland into other parts of Ireland to the injury of the mares of the country, do you think that any possible disadvantage that there might be with regard to action could be cured by being crossed by a thoroughbred?—I think they would make typical brood mares for crossing with a thoroughbred horse.

2551. You don't think there would be any disadvantage in galloping or staying or in any other way?—I cannot see any disadvantage. I do not believe the action would be too high for fast going.

2552. Did you hear that it had been stated by a witness here that farmers could be relied on as a rule to give a true pedigree of their horses?—If you know them they would, not otherwise.

2553. If you know them they will tell you the truth about the horse?—Yes, I think if you know them they will.

2554. Did you hear that the classes which were stated to have bred the horses which have given Ireland a name for good Irish horses were the gentry and the farmers over £200 valuation?—I saw that in print; I think it was Mr. Roberts said it.

2555. Then if these people got a statement from the farmers how their mares were bred, do you think there would be the least danger, when they wanted to buy a mare to breed a hunter, in their buying a mare that was got by a Hackney stallion, if they did not want one?—They would know if they bought the mare near them what she was got by.

2556. It was a danger they could guard against?—They could guard against it. If they went to a distant fair to buy from a stranger they would not get a true pedigree; they would simply see the horse and buy it from its appearance.

2557. You were asked if Messrs. East and Wimbush, dealers, who buy these high class harness horses did a large trade in your district?—They buy a great many at Moy fair.

2558. There is a very large market from which to buy that class of horse?—A great many small dealers buy. A man called Maguire, of Fermanagh, buys 300 or 400 every year and ships them to England.

2559. And are there other dealers in the North?—Yes, from Derry and places come down to Enniskillen and Clones.

2560. If Messrs. East and Wimbush, found a good looking horse that went well they would not be particular about the pedigree?—I don't think they know much about pedigree; they deal in every stock.

2561. Do you know as a matter of fact that Messrs. East and Wimbush have bought a good many American horses?—From my own knowledge I cannot say.

2562. Do you know anything about the importation of American horses into Ireland?—I saw two Canadian horses, the highest class of Canadian horses; they belonged to a brother-in-law of Lord Lansdowne, and were bought by a friend of his . . . . I think our own are very much preferable to them. They have very fine shoulders and crest but very bad hind quarters and the rump fell away altogether, and I suppose they were the pick of Canadian horses; I never saw Canadian horses before.

2563. Do you think it would be to the advantage of traders in Ireland if the American horses or foreign horses were branded in any way so as to distinguish them?—Very much, I think.

2564. You would be in favour of branding?—Yes, if they could be distinguished without being disfigured.

2565. Do you think that would put up the price of Irish horses?—I think they would do them good. It would prevent the Irish character being taken away from them unfairly. I like all foreign goods marked, meat especially.

2566. CHAIRMAN.—One or two questions so as to be quite sure that we have got your meaning correctly. You said in answer to Lord Rathdonnell that you accounted for the improvement in your district partly to the fact that a better class of mare had been imported from other parts of the country?—Partly to that. In order to obtain the Royal Dublin Society's prizes, the people were at more pains to keep good mares. It was the Dublin Society's Scheme and their prizes for mares that kept good mares in the country instead of their being sold.

2567. You mean that the improvement is due to keeping better mares belonging to each district and also to the importation of a better class of mares; not to the introduction of a new strain of blood or anything of that kind?—Not to the introduction of a new strain of blood at all I think. It is solely due to keeping better mares.

2568. Well then, I think you mentioned in connection with the staying powers of the Hackney horse that you got your own out of a pedigree mare?—It is the mare I referred to, she is a pedigree Hackney mare and also a four-year-old gelding out of her which I am driving also, by "Donal Grant," a celebrated Hackney. I am driving both of them now.

2569. Do you think there is anything like what might be called a new industry capable of being created in your country by producing horses by pure bred Hackney sires and pure bred Hackney mares?—I think there could be a very great market about Belfast, not in my part of the country. I don't think there could be a market for those in this part of the country, not for the pedigree mares.

2570. Do you attribute the staying qualities of this animal you named to its being pure bred on both sides?—I don't know what to attribute it to, I thought it was the natural Hackney blood. They are from old generations of Norfolk mares.

2571. You think the Hackney blood is likely, generally speaking, to transmit staying qualities to the produce?—I can only speak from my own experience, I have three Hackney mares now and they all, I find, are very hard.

2572. You would not favour the introduction of Hackney blood into Meath, Kildare, and other places of that kind?—No, certainly not.

2573. And you said that Messrs. East and Wimbush, and others—I did not quite understand whether it was that they did not care, or could not distinguish the Hackney blood?—I do not think they could distinguish, and even if they could they would not care; if they saw a suitable horse they would not care what it was got by.

2574. Do you think the breeders in these counties you mention would be able to distinguish whether the mares have a strain of the Hackney blood in them or not?—I am sure they could not, I have seen Hackney mares that one could hardly tell from a thoroughbred mare.

2575. Then if you think the Hackney strain is undesirable in those counties how would it be kept out?—I think it would be better than many of the mares they get in. I should prefer a hunter out of a thoroughbred horse to a hunter by a Hackney, but I think the Hackney sire would produce a better class of mares to breed from to get a good hunter.

2576. Are there any ponies in this part of Donegal that you are acquainted with?—The mares are nearly all what you call pony mares. We buy a great many polo ponies there, all the English dealers come to my county to buy polo ponies.

2577. What kind are the stallions?—Some of them are light, well-bred stallions as a rule. All the mares have been starved, this was what kept down their size so much.

2578. Would you call these ponies a distinctive breed?—No, I think not. Lord Enniskillen, a member of the Commission, kept a Forester pony for some time, and he got splendid ponies.

2579. Do you think the Hackney sire would improve the breeding of these polo ponies?—No, I don't think it would; I think it would be a bad cross for a polo pony.

2580. What would you recommend?—I think the polo pony breeding is all on chance. I am breeding myself at present a polo pony. I have got Arab foals, and I am putting them to a thoroughbred horse, "Scotch Monk." The dams originally, or the grand dams, were polo ponies, well-bred mares. I could not get their pedigree; it could not be found.

2581. As far as polo ponies are concerned, you would not cross these West Donegal ponies with the Hackney?—Not to get polo ponies. I don't think there are so many in West Donegal as there are about Fermanagh. I don't think they would breed anything

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in West Donegal suitable to buy; they are all very bad shouldered and very light in bone.

2582. You must have misunderstood me—you don't mean to say that the produce of these ponies of West Donegal are sold as polo ponies?—I gave a wrong answer if I said that. I don't think their produce are sold as polo ponies at all. I have tried to buy polo ponies up there very often, and I never got one yet.

2583. What class of mares did your father keep?—Hunters, brood mares with two or three crosses of the thoroughbred in them. I have known him sell some Clydesdale crosses for high-class hunters; I would not like to buy them myself.

2584. You certainly prefer, I gather from you, the Hackney to the Clydesdale or any other cart kind?—Very much, and very much also to the Cleveland. There is a Cleveland in one end of our own county; I don't like it at all; I don't like the crosses by it.

2585. It is specially for giving bone substance and action?—Bone and soundness is the principal thing.

2586. Would you prefer the Hackney to the thoroughbred; I mean a suitable thoroughbred horse with sufficient bone?—If a thoroughbred could be found to give the same characteristics, I would prefer the thoroughbred. I have never yet seen the thoroughbred that would.

2587. And you think in the case of small farmers under £20 valuation, that the breeding of horses is profitable to them?—Yes, certainly; very much.

2588. Do you think they can afford to pay a suitable fee, one large enough to obtain the services of a good horse?—I am afraid they could not pay a high fee—or they would not, rather. But with the Dublin Society prizes they can do well enough.

2589. And as regards the registration of half-bred horses, I understand you to say that you do not approve of it as regards what you call half-breds, but you would not object to some horses which are not in the Stud Book being registered after careful selection?—I would not object to any stallion in the Hunters' Improvement Society's Stud Book; six crosses, I think, they register.

2590. And you think the foreign horses should be branded in order to be distinguished?—I think it would be very desirable in the interests of the Irish horse.

2591. Why if those buyers like Messrs. East and Wimbush and others do not care to know how the horses are bred, what difference would it make if the horses came from America?—I don't think it would make much difference, but it would prevent the character of the Irish horse being taken away. These other horses, I think, are not well-bred.

2592. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Talking of these farmers under £20 valuation, what price at the various ages do you think would pay the farmer; what is the lowest age at which they are usually sold?—One and three-quarters, coming two.

2593. What price does he get, and what price would pay him?—He gets £10 as a rule, from that to £16.

2594. Would that pay his expenses?—Yes, I think it would. I think if he got £16 coming two, it would pay him very well indeed. They do not give them any sort of care; they work the mare up to a few days of foaling, and they work her again shortly afterwards. There is no waste; there is just the keep of the colt up to a year.

2595. Suppose the farmer keeps them until they are three or four, what would you put it at for those years?—I always consider you could not do it under £10 a year at the lowest. £40 for four year olds would be the lowest that could make any profit, that is without any feeding at all.

2596. Well, then, there is a great deal of talk about Hackney action, do you think that excessive action is desirable for a farmer?—No, I do not.

2597. Does not excessive action necessitate want of power?—I think it is power wasted; I would not say want of power.

2598. Waste of power, I beg pardon?—Waste of power.

2599. That must necessarily stop power of endurance and give less power?—Yes, I should think so.

2600. You have been a hunting man all your life. You understand what riding a horse is, and you say you don't think that Hackney action interferes with a horse in galloping or in getting over the ground fast?—I would not hunt a pedigree Hackney, but I think the mare got by a Hackney stallion out of the ordinary country mare would get a good mare to breed from with a thoroughbred. I am speaking of the hunter class. I mean a hunter?—I would not like a hunter to have Hackney action.

2601. You don't think the Hackney can gallop?—No.

2602. You said you did not think the action interfered with the galloping power?—I mean the action of the cross of a thoroughbred stallion with a half-bred Hackney mare, in that case the action would not be potent enough to interfere.

2603. Have you ever seen a Hackney gallop?—Yes, I have.

2604. Do you think the general formation of the ordinary Hackney is calculated to get safely over the country?—There are Hackneys and Hackneys. My own Hackneys cannot be kept in; they will jump anything; they are rather too much of the Norfolk Hackney.

2605. Do you think he would go quickly and safely over a Meath double?—He would go safely over a Meath double, but he would not go too quickly. But I think if a thoroughbred stallion were crossed with him the produce would go both quickly and safely over it.

2606. With regard to the conformation of the shoulders of the ordinary Hackney do you think it is a conformation that is either comfortable to the rider as a riding shoulder, or that is likely to gallop and get quickly and safely over the country?—All the Hackneys I have seen have splendid shoulders. I ride my own Hackneys very comfortably.

2607. Do you like Hackneys with broad withers?—I do not care about broad withers.

2608. How many have you seen with riding shoulders?—A great majority of them, I think the Norfolk Hackney has not riding shoulders, and I would not have them brought into the country, but the Yorkshire is much more of the thoroughbred.

2609. Do you think that that cross is likely to give a good conformation for a riding horse?—No, I would not encourage the Hackney if I could get a good thoroughbred. I think the Hackney is far better than the Clydesdale or the Shire cross which people are using to get a big brood mare.

2610. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What breed was your mare?—A Norfolk mare, curiously enough.

2611. I thought you said you did not care for them?—No, and if I had money enough I would buy a Yorkshire mare and sell her.

2612. You said you have seen Hackneys that you could not distinguish from thoroughbreds?—Yes.

2613. And I think you also stated that you would not like to see any of this breed introduced into Kildare and Meath?—No, I would not like to see the Hackney stallion in Meath or Kildare. I would like to get the mares there crossed with a thoroughbred.

2614. Suppose the foals produced by the Congested Districts Board's stallions were to get into Meath and Kildare, is there any danger of them doing some harm?—I don't think so. I don't think they would do any harm.

2615. You are rather fond of trying experiments, I think?—I am afraid so.

2616. Your father was a very successful exhibitor and breeder?—Very successful.

2617. Have you any of his stock left, his horses?—Yes, I have. I have only one now, that is a descendant, of course. She is a brood mare.

2618. He also had a lot of shorthorns?—Yes.

2619. What have you now?—Polled Angus.

2620. He also had sheep—are they the same?—They are the same, what there are of them. I sold them all last year.

2621. You have changed everything?—I intend to return to the sheep as soon as the land is cleared.

2622. You have got rid of all the successful articles?—I was much more successful in sheep than my father.

2623. And then you have got rid of them?—I have got rid of them to let the land rest for a year or two. I had too many sheep, and I could not get a good shepherd.

2624. Still you like experiments?—I think it is no experiment resting the land from sheep.

2625. Mr. CAREW.—You say that the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme has improved the stock?—Yes.

2626. It is due largely to importations from the south of Ireland?—Not altogether. It makes people keep a good mare. If a man goes down south and gets a good mare he keeps her.

2627. These are half-bred mares?—Altogether.

2628. You play polo in Fermanagh?—Yes; we have a very successful polo team.

2629. You think that in the case of the farmers who sell their produce as foals it would pay them to produce an animal of a class suitable for polo ponies?—It would pay no man to produce a polo pony. The producer gets no price; it is the man who trains the pony who gets all the benefit.

2630. From the small farmers' point of view the producing of polo ponies is not profitable?—Not profitable at all. I think polo pony breeding is entirely a matter of chance.

2631. MR. WRENCH.—You were asked about the excessive action of the Hackney, do you think that the Hackney, if he has excessive action, must always produce that excessive action when crossed with an ordinary country mare?—No, I think not; he makes her lift her legs and gives her straight action.

2632. If a horse has got to be crossed with country mares, excessive action is not a drawback in that respect?—He requires good action to counteract the bad action of most of the country mares in our parts.

2633. Most country mares have bad action now?—Very bad.

2634. You think that the existing breed of harness horses in your district can be improved with ordinary sires?—Yes.

2635. You think action is one of the chief requisites of a harness horse?—One of the chief requisites in order to enable it to sell well.

2636. I think you have seen the Hackney stallions of the Congested Districts Board?—I remember them well.

2637. Do you think them a suitable type to introduce into Ireland?—They are a splendid type; I don't like the Welsh cobs.

2638. I was referring to the Hackneys?—I think the Hackneys are a very good type.

2639. A class of horse calculated to improve the Irish small farmers' mares?—I think so. I don't like the small Hackneys the Congested Districts Board have got as well as the large ones. I don't like the cob horse.

2640. You prefer the large ones?—Yes.

2641. Are their shoulders well made?—Some of the shoulders are most excellent; you could not wish for better shoulders.

2642. You stated to me before that you think those big breeders have it quite within their power not to buy mares that have any blood to which they object?—They can buy from men near them, and be sure of the pedigree.

2643. It is only at the fair far off that they are not sure of the breeding?—Yes.

2644. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything more you would like to say to the Commission?—No, my lord; I don't recollect anything.

Mr. RICHARD THOMPSON, Brookborough, County Fermanagh, examined.

2645. CHAIRMAN—You live at Brookborough?—Beside it.

2646. Are you engaged in farming?—I am, sir.

2647. And do you breed horses?—I do, sir.

2648. What class of horses?—I go in for breeding hunters and first-class harness horses.

2649. Have you got any sires of your own?—No.

2650. What kind of mares do you breed these hunters from?—The mare is very nearly clean bred, such a mare as a person would choose to ride to hounds.

2651. And what horses do you put them to?—Thoroughbred horses.

2652. How long have you been breeding horses?—I have been breeding them constantly these ten years, and off and on within the last forty years. I feed from three to six young horses every year.

2653. You have invariably used thoroughbred sires?—Yes, I breed from thoroughbred sires.

2654. You had no experience in breeding from any other kind?—I have in my experience bred from others not quite thoroughbred. They sometimes chance to have a fair horse, but very often they do not.

2655. Why have you never tried, perhaps you are not fond of trying experiments?—No.

2656. Why?—I cannot afford to try experiments.

2657. Is your part of the country sufficiently supplied with suitable thoroughbred stallions?—There are a lot of them, but there is not a good one in the whole lot according to my notion. I would not call any of them good ones. They are old used-up race horses and thin horses. They could not step over a marble, some of them.

2658. Are there any Hackneys or Clevelands in your part of the county?—There is no Hackney horse on my side of the county.

2659. Is that one reason why you have always used a thoroughbred sire, or did you prefer it?—I preferred it.

2660. Do you think that the Hackney or any of these cart horse sires are suitable to the mares in your district?—They might do for some, but if a man has a mare suitable for a hunter I prefer giving her a thoroughbred horse.

2661. Have you formed any opinion as to the selling price of high-class carriage horses the produce of thoroughbreds, compared with the produce of Hackneys?—I have no experience of that; yes; in one case I knew a neighbour of mine to sell two horses together at £110. One of them was the produce of a Hackney—a Hackney of Mr. Archdale's, I think he was.

2662. Do you consider your district suitable to breed hunters?—I do.

2663. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood would be advisable?—That is a question on which I could not give a decided opinion. My experience has not been so great that it would enable me to pronounce a decided opinion.

2664. I think you said there were no cart horse stallions in your district at all?—Not within seven or eight or nine miles of where I live.

2665. Is the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme at work in your district?—It is.

2666. What do you think of it?—I think it is an improvement on the old system.

2667. You think it has done good?—I think it has. If we could get a better class of stud horse I think it would be an admirable system.

2668. Are you in the habit of attending Clones fair?—Yes, occasionally. I sell all my horses there at the Moy.

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Mr. Richard Thompson.

2669. Have you come across the produce of the Congested Districts Board's horses?—I could not say I have ever seen one of them.

2670. Have you any opinion as to the advisability of breeding from two-year-olds?—I would not do it, nor from a three-year-old.

2671. Nor a three-year-old?—No.

2672. Do you think the breed of horses generally is improving or not in your district?—Well now I think it is rather at a stand still. I have had as good horses forty years ago as I could get yet.

2673. Are the farmers inclined to sell their best mares and breed from the worst?—I am sorry to say they are too much inclined to it. The system I adopt is that I do not breed from young mares. I buy a hunter that is past hunting properly, they make a good farm mare and breed a better horse than young fillies. Another objection I have is that it deteriorates the breeding of horses, breeding from very young ones. If a mare is bred from a three-year-old she will not make as good a class of mare as if bred from a five-year-old. It is killing the goose for the golden egg.

2674. Do you think anything could be done to make the farmers breed from better mares?—I do not see how it could be done, except that those who do breed from good mares, when they see the results, it might be an object lesson to them, otherwise it is no use in talking to them.

2675. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What is the nature of the soil in your district?—There are different varieties. About the lake side it is a heavy clay loam; further out, where I live, there is a gravelly, limestone land. There is limestone, sandstone, and peat on my farm, still it is suitable for breeding, and there are active sound horses on it.

2676. Where did you buy the horses you feed?—Any places I happened to get them, at Clones, and I have gone south to Ballinasloe, and even as far as Cahirmee. I would spend £10 looking for good colts before I would buy one that did not fit me.

2677. Is the general run of mares good in your district, and suitable to mate with thoroughbreds?—There are a good many that could be got suitable to breed from, but unfortunately a lot of mares are breeding to horses they are not suitable for. I fancy a half-bred horse or a Hackney would be better to put one of these underbred mares to.

2678. Is it because of lack of bone or size?—A little of both sometimes.

2679. You made use of the expression just now "half-bred horse"—What would you describe as a half-bred?—Any horse short of a thoroughbred.

2680. Do you think if a horse of that description were standing down in your neighbourhood, and serving, and along side of him a Clydesdale, a Hackney, or a Cleveland, or anything of the cart horse type, to which of the horses would the farmers send their mares?—I think they would send them to the half-bred horse that would be nearly thoroughbred. As for their opinion of Hackneys I would not take in hand to express it, as I might not be doing them justice. I do not know all their minds upon it. I myself have bought colts from farmers who have bred from half-bred horses or horses nearly thoroughbred, and they produced magnificent horses. There was a horse in my neighbourhood called "Young Simoon" from Lord Caledon's Old Simoon—unfortunately he was castrated at five years, and we did not know his value until his services were over.

2681. How was he bred?—From one of those old celebrated Irish trotting mares, he had splendid action, very nearly like a Hackney.

2682. Have you any experience of the cross between the country mare and the Clydesdale?—I believe a good pure bred Clydesdale would pay the farmer to breed from if a person had a mare nearly thoroughbred, but unfortunately we have not many mares of that kind. I know there is a demand for tip-top Clydesdale horses, but our country is not the best to sell them in.

2683. Have you found that in a mare with a Clydesdale cross the bone is softer and more apt to fly?—I think the people in our country are somewhat deceived about bone. The Clydesdale has a lot of hair on his legs and big feet. When people see this they say "there is a great horse, he has a lot of bone," but when you take the hair off you will often find a thin shank below the knee—it is a very small bone. I have colts myself pure-bred, you would think their shank was small, and when you catch it under the knee you would be surprised at the thickness of it.

2684. Mr. CAREW.—You say that in your district they breed from huntresses that are past their work?—Yes, or carriage mares.

2685. You mate them with thoroughbreds?—Yes, and we get a good hunter and a good harness one as well, a great horse to sell. There was one mare of that kind I bred from, and the first time I put her to a thoroughbred horse, "Rattlin the Reefer," I got a colt that I got £100 for before he was four years old, and the dealer got £20 more for him before he paid me.

2686. You think you could breed a hunter or a harness horse from that as well as from a Hackney?—I would rather chance it.

2687. What was this horse by—Young Simoon? How was the dam bred?—That is about thirty years ago, but as far as I can find out she was an Irish mare celebarted for her fast action in harness.

2688. A sire of that description you would approve of?—It would do good in any country; it never got an unsound horse.

2689. Had good bone and substance?—Yes, beautiful quarters, fine back, and all that.

2690. You would not breed from a two or three-year-old?—No.

Not before a four-year-old?—Yes, and then they are worth too much to breed from if they are the right sort, that is, for a farmer like me, we are not millionaires.

2691. If a mare is good for a four-year-old she will not be kept for breeding?—No, that is what is injuring the breed of horses.

2692. The good ones are sold out?—Yes, and that could be remedied if you buy an aged mare of a good type, and they will breed better than the four-year-old.

2693. Is the produce of a two-year-old weak?—I never saw a good one; it is not very much done on our side, but I never saw a good one.

2694. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Are there any of the old Irish mares known in your district?—I do not think there is a true bred one, but there might be descendants of some, their shape may catch people's eye.

2695. They have practically disappeared?—They are so much mixed up with other breeds it is difficult to find them.

2696. Do you find a difficulty in getting good brood mares?—I can always get them when I want them.

2697. What sire did you say you prefer for breeding?—A thoroughbred horse.

2698. For both hunters and carriage horses?—I like a wide thoroughbred horse, wide about the heart, with tip-top action. These weeds of race horses that are trained at two years old, sent to the country after racing, I do not think they are serviceable to the country, I would like one of the half-breds I speak of in preference.

2699. The present style of thoroughbred sire then is not suitable?—We have some good ones; Rattlin the Reefer, for instance; but some of them are shallow and light.

2700. The same sire that would breed a good hunter would breed a good carriage horse?—I think so.

2701. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think it would be easy to find the thoroughbred horse you describe?—I have never done any business in buying thoroughbred horses, but it is the kind I would like.

2702. Have you seen many?—Yes, Royal Meath, Rattlin the Reefer, and a few more.

2703. That class of horses would cost a good deal of money?—They would, but I think it would pay, charge a little more.

2704. Do you think the people would pay an extra service fee?—I think that if the Society gave a little assistance a good many people would use them.

2705. You attend Moy fair, Mr. Thompson?—Yes, I sell most of my horses there.

2706. Have you bought many horses there?—I bought a horse there at £30 a couple of years ago, and sold him nine months after for £120.

2707. Do you remember anything of the produce of Broad Arrow that used to stand there?—I saw a great many of them about that country.

2708. What kind were they?—High stepping horses but very bad about the quarters and thighs; weakly thighs, if not for their action they were not worth a £10 note in my opinion.

2709. Did they sell well?—They did.

2710. You think action does a great deal in the sale of a horse?—Very much.

2711. Do you think it pays better to breed hunters or harness horses?—Hunters of course, but ours is not a district for getting value for hunters, I have had to sell hunters for the price of harness horses. Dealers that buy hunters do not come to our district for them.

2712. But the dealers that buy harness horses do?—They do.

2713. Would you register any sires but thoroughbred horses?—I would not advise upon the subject. There would be a lot of bad horses registered, and I have no doubt there are some good horses that are not registered.

2714. I suppose you have seen instances of thoroughbred horses producing very bad stock?—I have seen them produce horses very hard to be sold.

2715. Would you be in favour of not registering any except those who had been proved as to their stock?—I would.

2716. Have you seen any American horses?—Very little; they do not come into my neighbourhood, I saw them at Moy.

2717. Where do you think most of the horses produced in Ulster are sold?—Some of them are sold in Dublin at the Horse Show.

2718. These would be hunters?—Well, they buy carriage horses there, too.

2719. Yes, but entered in the hunter class?—Dealers go to Ballsbridge for harness horses, though they are classed as hunters in the Show. My opinion is that the horse that would make a good hunter would make a good harness horse if it has action.

2720. Do you think many horses are sent to other parts of Ireland from Ulster?—Not so many as used formerly be sent to Ballinasloe and Mullingar.

2721. Most of them are sold in the north to English and Scotch dealers?—Yes.

2722. And go out of the country in that way?—Yes. The produce of eight or nine counties is shown at Moy fair.

2723. Moy fair is practically the best monthly fair in Ireland?—I think it is.

2724 CHAIRMAN.—You attend fairs all over the country?—I used, but I do not travel so much now as I used; I am getting too old.

2725. When did you last attend in the south?—I have not been in the south these ten years.

2726. Previous to that you had considerable experience of the fairs all over the country?—Yes.

2727. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You told us that besides what you bred you had occasionally fed some trade horses?—Yes.

2728. Did these horses chiefly come from the south?—Some of them; but some I got about my own neighbourhood; some at home.

2729. With regard to these horses, what time of the year generally did you buy them?—Whenever I have a loose box empty I look out for something to put in its place.

2730. But there are a great many horses bought in the early autumn in the south and taken up to your country and sold in the spring?—That is so.

2731. Can you tell me what cost these horses entail during that time?—Well, it would be about fifteen shillings a week and £5 for training and £5 for fair expenses.

2732. You always train them?—Yes; always train them to ride.

2733. Mr. WRENCH.—What do you feed them on?—Good rye grass hay, a little oats, and a little mash.

2734. A little mangold?—No.

2735. Any boiled barley?—No.

2736. No boiled wheat?—No. Some boiled Swede turnips; a small quantity to keep their bowels open.

2737. They are fed on soft, sloppy food?—I would not do it. I have a horse I give four feeds of oats to in the day.

2738. They are kept in a dark house, I believe?—Some people who do not know their business do that; but I do not see anything to be gained by it.

2739. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—They are generally very well turned out when they get to Moy fair.

Witness—We turn them out as well as we can. We like to retain our customers when we have them. I have been selling to the same customers for the last thirty or forty years.

2740. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything you would like to say as to how the breed of horses could be improved generally?—I think the thoroughbred horse is the best breed to get carriage horses and hunters from, and the others might be got from the half-bred or the Hackney.

2741. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Would you tell us who the dealer is that generally buys from you?—There are seven or eight of them; Mr. Huddersall, from Preston; Mr. Vandelon, who lives at Malahide, a Frenchman; I sell also to Tom MacMahon, and to Mr. McAllen, of Manchester.

2742. Do they go for hunters?—They buy them as harness horses or hunters.

2743. Could you give us any information about horses sold to foreign dealers and exported, not to England?—There is one dealer named Maguire, near Lisnaskea; he would sell nearly a hundred horses in a month to foreign dealers.

2744. You do not know to what countries they go?—To France, Switzerland, and Belgium; some to Italy, and I believe to Germany too. A dealer would come and buy nearly fifty horses from him at a time; another dealer might come when he had a score more. Mr. Robinson, at Ballybay, sells I, think, even more horses to the same class of exporter.

2745. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do the foreign dealers try to buy a mare as a rule?—I believe they are fonder of mares.

2746. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Some are bought by dealers and some by Government dealers at a fixed price. Do you know the price the Government dealers pay?—I think there are two of them, Messrs. Block and Matthews, give as high as £34 and £35 for the class of horses they buy, troopers. Sometimes they find a trade horse, and they would give from £50 to £60 for a good one, that is, if they happened to get them from these men.

2747. Lord ASHTOWN.—The troopers they buy at three?—Yes.

2748. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Do you know about the Dutch dealers?—No.

2749. Mr. WRENCH.—About the class of horses sold by Mr. Maguire and Mr. Robinson, are they sold as troopers and at trooper price?—The greater part of them are.

2750. They are about £35?—Yes; but these dealers have a trade for a better class of horses too; some of them buy three-year-old colts, of course they give them to other parties when they go to their own country to train and fetch out and perhaps buy them back again.

Nov. 19, 1896.

Mr. T. A. Ingram.

Mr. T A. INGRAM, Figart House, Dunfanaghy, County Donegal, examined.

2751. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Donegal?—Yes, in the north-west of the county.

2752. You carry on the occupation of a farmer?—Yes.

2753. You are a land agent also?—Yes, I have some agencies.

2754. You are well acquainted with the north-western portion of the county?—Yes, I know nearly a whole barony. I know the district from Gweedore to Letterkenny, that is about forty miles.

2755. You breed horses yourself?—I do.

2756. Do you consider your district a suitable one for horse-breeding?—We are in a thoroughly congested district.

2757. That is not quite an answer to the question whether it is suitable for horse-breeding?—Some parts of it are. Away west towards Gweedore it is not suitable for horse-breeding, the land and grass are poor.

2758. What is the general nature of the soil in your district?—Where I live myself it is a strong clay soil with gravel through it, and as I live near the sea shore it is very sandy.

2759. What is the class of horse in the country?—They are nearly all ponies, light ponies. There are some few exceptions. The better class of farmers have heavier and stronger horses.

2760. What class of horse do you breed yourself?—My horses are all between 15 and 16 hands high. I keep five horses. I always keep one brood mare, and I am obliged to send to Letterkenny, Derry, Strabane, or Raphoe to a horse. My rateable qualification charges me too high a fee for the Congested Districts Board's horses, I go elsewhere.

2761. You breed them for sale?—Some for sale and some for my own use on the farm.

2762. The greater number of the farmers in your district have small holdings?—Yes, and avail themselves greatly of the Congested Districts Board's horses.

2763. What class of horse do they require for their farm work?—They are almost all from about 13½ or 14 hands high, the horse of the locality

2764. In your opinion would a heavier horse be more suitable?—The Congested Districts Board's horse has been very much availed of, and I think there is an inclination for a heavier horse.

2765. What class of horse is most suitable for the use of the farmers in your district?—I do believe the Hackneys are very suitable for our horses, which are light little mares, and clean limbed.

2766. You have not availed yourself of the Congested Districts Board's stallions?—No, I have not.

2767. Why?—The fee you pay depends on the rateable qualification.

2768. What fee would you have to pay?—£2, foal or no foal; consequently I do not pay that. I went further.

2769. You have sent your mares some distance?—Not less than twenty miles. This year we have another horse in the district, and I have not sent so far.

2770. Have you any objection to say what fee you paid? You sent them to a thoroughbred horse?—The trustees of Lord Leitrim have brought a pure bred Suffolk Punch from England, and I send to that horse, a good many others went as well.

2771. You send all your mares to a thoroughbred horse?—Not of late years. I was not very successful when I did, and I did not send again. I have very ar to send, and a good deal of expense.

2772. Do you prefer this Suffolk Punch to the Hackney, or do you send to the Suffolk Punch because the fee is less? Supposing the fee to be equal, which would you prefer?—If I had a Hackney size enough, I would send to a Hackney as fast as any horse. The first horse we got was a small horse and did not breed large. The second was a large horse, and had a white face. He stamps some of the foals with this, and I think there is an objection to him on that account, but he breeds good horses. I had experiecne of the Suffolk Punch on the Leitrim Estate. He did well, and we are trying it again.

2773. Are there suitable stallions in the district?—Quite the reverse; nothing but weeds, except the Congested Districts Board horses.

2774. Do you know whether the horses of the Congested Districts Board stallions get bigger prices than others?—Yes, larger than what was paid before they came.

2775. In answer to one of the questions we sent out to you, you said the mares were active, clean, and hardy, the want of size being the principal draw-back?—Yes.

2776. You think larger horses might be reared?—I think so.

2777. How long has there been a Congested Districts Board stallion in the neighbourhood?—1892 was the first year.

2778. What was there before then?—Just the general cross-bred mixture of the country, a good deal crossed with the Clydesdale.

2779. And if you had your choice what breed would you select as the most suitable for your district?—Something stronger and bigger than the Hackney for my mares.

2780. For the district generally?—I think the Hackneys suit our mares fairly well in north-west Donegal.

3781. Do you know what becomes of the young stock when sold?—The majority of them are taken out of the country. Some of them are sent as far as Milford, twenty-four miles away, and sold.

2782. I take it that as you send your own mares to the Suffolk Punch you consider his produce satisfactory?—Yes, from the experience I have noticed of the same kind of horse before. They are strong, and are cleaner limbed than the Clydesdales. They have good action sometimes too.

2783. In answer to question 26, you recommend breeding from pure bred horses; what do you mean by a pure bred horse?—I maintain the Suffolk Punch is pure bred. We are fortunate in our efforts to breed from the Clydesdales with our mares. We get a fair cross from them. At six quarters old they get a fair price in the fairs.

2784. By pure bred horse you mean a pure bred horse of any breed?—Yes.

2785. Have you any experience in your district of the produce of a sound thoroughbred horse?—We have very little experience of the produce of a thoroughbred horse where I live. In Raphoe and Strabane I have seen them, that is in the district which is the better part of Donegal.

2786. Have you sufficient experience to be able to compare the produce of a sound thoroughbred horse with the produce of a Hackney stallion?—No; because the thoroughbreds are so seldom used there.

2787. Is it the custom of the farmers to sell their best fillies?—I am sorry to say it is. The best fillies go out of the place.

2788. Can you suggest any way in which that might be prevented?—Except by giving them premiums for good mares, that is all I can suggest.

2789. Do you buy mares yourself in other parts of the country?—No; I get one or two brood mares; I have one from Clones, County Monaghan, at present.

2790. What do you sell your horses at?—I have got £35 for some of my horses.

2791. Do you sell them as carriage horses?—Generally farming and driving horses.

2792. I think you said there was an admixture of Clydesdale blood?—A good deal in the locality in which I live.

2793. Where is the Clydesdale stallion?—The late Lord Leitrim owned him; he was sold before the Suffolk Punch came.

2794. Do you approve of that breed?—They have bone and substance; they farm very well, and are sometimes fairly good driving horses.

2795. The work generally on the farms in your district is I believe of a light character?—Very light indeed.

2796. Would it be any advantage to the farmers for their own work to breed heavier horses than those now in the country?—Well, I can hardly tell; they seem quite satisfied with the Hackneys since they came to the country, but the better class of farmers do go out to Letterkenny to get bigger horses.

2797. For the advantage of breeding bigger horses for sale or agricultural purposes?—It would be for sale they would breed them.

2798. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you know the district called the Rosses?—Yes.

2799. Is that your district?—I happen to be agent for Lloyd's, it is near the sea shore, and my duty often brings me there after a shipwreck.

2800. It is near you?—between thirty and forty miles away.

2801. The nature of the soil where you live is quite different from the nature of the soil in the Rosses?—It is a good deal better, there is very poor soil at the Rosses.

2802. We had it stated yesterday that all the farming work is done by hand in the Rosses?—Yes, digging. Very few horses do anything except driving in the Rosses.

2803. That is not the case in your district?—No.

2804. What is the usual size of the brood mares in your district?—From thirteen and a half to fourteen and a half hands; some few go to fifteen.

2805. Are they ponies or cobs or small cart horses?—I would call them cobs more than anything else; there are ponies as well; they are good cob horses the majority of them.

2806. That is the class of animal you work on your farm?—Yes.

2807. Is the soil stiff or light?—It is a fair, strong, clay soil where I live, but towards the west and that direction it is sandy, and nothing but peaty mountainy soil, on towards the Rosses and Gweedore a boggy soil.

2808. These thick cobby animals are they adapted for working the farms?—They are most useful horses.

2809. You do not want them to increase in size?—The farmers who breed for sale would prefer them to increase in size to gain a better price.

2810. Are they sharp, quick, ponies?—They are sharp, hardy horses, and there is great endurance in them. They are an active hardy little horse.

2811. Have you ever thought of using a Barb or an Arab?—I understand there was an Arab went to the Rosses but we never got one.

2812. Do you think it would be a suitable cross?—No; the late Earl of Leitrim got an Arab there and his stock was a remarkable failure.

2813. What about the produce of that stallion; did nobody breed from that?—I never knew anyone to breed from it. They were sold out of the place; they were not a success by any means.

2814. Mr. CAREW.—What sort of a sire would you recommend to mate with your mares?—I think if we had a strong Hackney it would do well enough with our mares.

2815. Have you any experience of the Hackney?—Only what I saw of the Congested Districts Board's the first year.

2816. How long is that?—Since 1892.

2817. Have you seen any of the produce sold?—Number of them.

2818. What price do they bring?—The yearlings from £5 to £8, the six-quarters old will go from £9 to £12 and £13; a very good one would go £1 higher; the three-year-olds would go to £16, and exceptionally good one as high as £20.

2819. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—What price do the farmers of your district pay for the service of a horse?—About £1, or £1 2*s.* 6*d.* perhaps.

2820. They have no difficulty in getting a suitable horse at that figure?—No, but there is the distance to go to him.

2821. How far?—Letterkenny would be the nearest place; it is twenty-two English miles from where I live.

2822. So that in your immediate neighbourhood there is a want of horses?—There are some weedy horses in the locality that get ten shillings; some poor men will go to them because they are near and cheap.

2823. You think these horses get so much work because they are so cheap?—I do; I know it.

2824. Mr. WRENCH.—I believe there is a very large number of horses bred by the people in the district you live in, and at Gweedore?—There are a great many.

2825. They use the horses chiefly for carrying panniers, manure, and turf, and carrying themselves to church?—Yes, they bring all their turf in panniers, and bring oats to market on the horse's back.

2826. That is very severe on horses?—Yes, it is very severe on the horse, but still they do it.

2827. There is a great deal of work for a horse there?—Yes.

2828. Horse-breeding is an industry there?—Yes, largely, in my district.

2829. And the sale of the foal is a considerable item in the receipts of every farmer?—Indeed it is.

2830. You do not think it possible to get these people to give up horse-breeding?—No.

2831. Can you suggest any horse more suitable than a Hackney for improving those mares?—I think if you had a horse of a larger size; Hackneys are nice horses, but they would like a larger horse.

2832. Would the produce of a Suffolk Punch not be too large to work on the small farms in the congested district?—No; I would say it would be too much going west to Gweedore, but not in the other direction, to Letterkenny and Milford.

2823. Your experience of horses got by the Congested Districts Board, I suppose, is with reference to Carrigart and Dunfanaghy?—Yes, and as far as Cloughaneely direction; the services of the horse went that far.

2834. As a matter of fact, I believe people have got much higher prices for their produce than before the horse went to that district?—Yes.

2835. Do you remember any of the country stallions in the district before?—I do; I remember back for twenty-five years.

2836. Were they not very common, underbred, miserable looking horses, generally half Clydesdale, with the native mare of the country?—Yes.

2837. The reason they used these sires was simply to get bigger foals?—Yes; and they come to market earlier. A six-quarter Clydesdale they would plough with in the spring, and then try to sell. They generally work their horses that they breed at six-quarter, coming two year old.

2838. It is necessary in supplying any horses to improve the breed of that district, to have hardy horses to stand a great deal of hardship?—It would require that. The pasture is not very good, except in some places. They are certainly hardy horses what we have in that district.

2839. I suppose in a great part of that district if the horses are housed, they are housed with the people in the house?—Yes; and cattle too sometimes, with the poorer people, I am sorry to say.

2840. I think you said Lord Leitrim's experiment with the Arab was not a success?—Yes, that is my opinion.

2841. And if you sent an Arab stallion the people would not use him?—I do not think they would. He might be better than what Lord Leitrim's people had, but there was no success breeding from him.

2842. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Was he accounted a good stamp?—He had a tendency to breed very small foals.

2843. CHAIRMAN.—I do not know that we have

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quite got what your own opinion is as to the breed of stallion best suitable for your district? You have told us you cannot compare the produce of the Hackney with the thoroughbred in your own district, as there is no thoroughbred horse?—There is no thoroughbred horse nearer than twenty miles.

2844. Supposing the Board provided a sound thoroughbred stallion and a Hackney stallion, have you any strong opinion which they would prefer?—I believe they would have the Hackney stallion. Our mares are too light to match with the thoroughbred horse.

2845. You think that would be the general opinion of the farmers of the district?—Yes.

Mr. James Dunlop, v.s.

JAMES DUNLOP, v.s., Downpatrick, examined.

2846. CHAIRMAN.—You are, I believe, a veterinary surgeon, living at Downpatrick?—I am.

2847. How long have you lived there, or in that locality?—Between thirty and forty years.

2848 Are there many horses bred in that district?—Yes; a great number.

2849. Do you breed horses yourself?—No, I don't farm, but I keep five stallions—English bred ones.

2850. What is the class of horse that is bred in your district?—They are mostly harness horses; but they keep blood horses, and half-breds, and Clydesdales.

2851. What class of horse do you think your district is most suitable to produce?—Harness horses.

2852. Is that the class that is usually bred?—Yes; they usually turn out harness horses, although there are a few hunters bred by the better class of farmers.

2853. I see you say, in answer to a question, that it would pay better to produce pure Hackneys?—Yes; I would approve of their breeding more pure animals, if I could get the Irish breeders to breed them pure and more certain—the old Irish breed of horses, to grade up.

2854. What are the kind of holdings generally in your district, are they small holdings or large holdings?—A great many small holdings, and a great number of large holdings, too; up to 200 acres and down to 20.

2855. Do you think it would pay the farmers generally to breed pure Hackneys?—It would pay as well as any other kind.

2856. Have you had any experience of breeding pure Hackneys yourself?—I bred two mares that I have entered, and I don't know of any other pure ones bred in the county.

2857. Are there many of them bred in your neighbourhood?—They patronise my horse very well; "Romeo" had 116 mares one year—he has averaged about 100 mares since I got him during the last seven or eight years.

2858. You have five stallions?—Yes.

2859. What are they?—One blood, three Hackneys, and one strong Yorkshire coaching horse.

2860. Which do you find the most demand for?—"Romeo" is an extra good horse, up to sixteen hands, a pure Hackney, and he has been largely patronised, and they are patronising the Yorkshire coaching horse very well; but the breeding is going down with us tremendously, very few mares served last year.

2861. Do you mean there is less demand?—The low prices, the prices are lower this autumn than ever: they are buying foals by thoroughbred horses for £5.

2862. How do you account for that?—The American competition; American horses coming in in such numbers principally.

2863. Where do those horses bred in your district go to, what is their destination?—They mostly go to England and Scotland.

2864. As carriage horses?—Harness horses.

2865. Are there any hunters bred in your district?—Yes; the better class of farmers keep some good mares, and send them to thoroughbred horses with the object of breeding hunters—they don't all turn out hunters though.

2866. What is the general character of the soil in your district?—It is rather a thin soil, very stony; the stones keep it open. It is loose, and rests on a slatey rock; it forms a kind of loose porous clay soil; some of it in Lecale is very light.

2867. What class of horse do you think is best for the farm work of the district?—Half-bred horses; the Hackneys would suit exceedingly well, good-sized Hackneys.

2868. Are there any thoroughbred stallions in your district?—There are plenty of thoroughbred stallions in the County Down.

2869. And, in your opinion, good ones?—Generally they have very good ones; there are plenty of good ones.

2870. And do you consider that the produce of a good thoroughbred would produce stock as saleable, or more saleable, or less saleable than the produce of a good Hackney?—Well, the produce of a thoroughbred horse would likely produce some higher-priced ones, and a good many lower-priced ones; they are very liable to come too light, and then they won't buy these light ones at all, they are thrown back on the breeder; then he goes with that light mare to a Clydesdale, or heavy half-bred horse, to get up strength and action.

2871. Comparing the Clydesdale or other horse of that stamp with the Hackney, which would you prefer for your district?—The Hackney would not get so many low-priced ones, nor perhaps so many high-priced ones as the thoroughbred horse.

2872. I am not talking of the thoroughbred horse, but the Clydesdale?—I would prefer the Hackney, because the Clydesdale is a very violent cross with these light mares, and the produce is very uncertain; it is not such a big cross with the Hackney.

2873. And, as between the Hackney and the thoroughbred, what is your opinion?—Very good harness horses, better than by the blood horses; they carry their heads magnificently, and when they are crossed they don't step too high, but just nice harness action.

2874. Do you consider your district more suitable to produce harness horses than hunters?—Yes, I do; but it is quite capable of producing hunters if they had the right class of mares.

2875. What is the matter with the mares?—They sell the best, the smaller farmers, and then they keep the three-cornered ones and the very light ones.

2876. And to produce the saleable hunter what stallion would you recommend, what breed?—I prefer a good strong blood horse for getting a hunter.

2877. I see in answer to the question "Are thoroughbred, half-bred, or Hackney stallions most used; if half-bred, how are those stallions used, and at what age do they begin to serve,"—you say, "Mostly half-bred, and bred in every conceivable way; they begin to serve at three years old." You said just now that your district is sufficiently supplied with good thoroughbred horses?—Sometimes I have seen thirty stallions in Downpatrick on a fair day at one time, and there might be half a dozen of those thoroughbred.

2878. The most of them are half-bred?—Most of them are half-bred.

2879. And as you say bred in every conceivable way?—Yes, but they are very good looking horses; we have a lot of very good looking half-bred horses, the mares are not equal to the horses at all.

2880. Well, generally speaking, would you say that the mares are inferior in your district?—Yes.

2881. I mean if you were to consider how the breed could be best improved, would you turn your attention rather to the preservation or introduction of better mares or better stallions?—Better mares, I would try to improve the mares; there is no want of good stallions with us.

2882. You say the prices of horses are very low?—Very low.

2883. Since when?—They have been falling for the last four years, and they are lower now than ever.

2884. Has the price got so low that it has ceased to be profitable to breed?—I believe it is unprofitable now, unless with a particularly good mare.

2885. You mean that the very high-class harness horses or hunters can still be bred profitably, but an ordinary general utility horse cannot?—No; it cannot be bred profitably now.

2886. And you refer that, I understand, a good deal to the importation of foreign horses?—Yes.

2887. Have you seen many of these foreign horses?—Yes, I have seen a few at that baker's in Belfast, Inglis', they have six Canadian horses.

2888. Where are they landed generally?—I think they are landed in Liverpool and brought across to Belfast.

2889. What is your opinion of them?—I was asking the drivers, they are not going to have any more, they are very soft as compared with the Irish horses, you cannot send them long journeys, they go off their feed.

2890. Are they sold as Canadian horses?—They are sold as Canadian horses.

2891. Do the buyers know their origin?—They do.

2892. So there is no deception?—No deception.

2893. Then the deterioration in the value of horses that you speak of would not be affected in any way by these foreign horses, whether branded or distinguished in any way?—I don't think it would, but it might prevent people from breeding from them, and if those passed into other hands they might be sold again for Irish horses; it would maintain the character of the Irish horse better if they were branded.

2894. You think the first buyer who recognized that it is a Canadian or American horse might pass it off afterwards as an Irish horse?—He might.

2895. In what way do you think they are inferior to the native bred ones?—They don't stand the journey so well, I am speaking more from report, though I have experience of one myself, I put it off the road in a very short time, they do not stand the road as well as the Irish.

2896. The horses you have seen are newly landed, they have not become acclimatised?—There might be something in that.

2897. Speaking in your professional capacity have you any fault to find with them?—They look very well, some of those horses, remarkably well.

2898. Can you suggest any way in which this competition could be legitimately stopped?—No, that is just what I cannot.

2899. Has the breed generally improved in your district of late years?—No, they have not improved, there are more bad horses in the fairs now than I saw twenty-five years ago.

2900. How do you account for that?—Farmers selling off their good mares.

2901. Where do they sell them to, do they go abroad or where?—They mostly go to England and Scotland, the dealers buy them and take them across there, and sometimes they take good ones themselves across to the English fairs.

2902. I gather that you attribute the deterioration in the breed a good deal to the mares, have you anything you can suggest to induce farmers to keep their best mares in the country?—I think these prizes you are giving for the mares is inducing some to keep better mares, it might be a check upon the deterioration.

2903. Do you think there has been a greater tendency of late years among farmers to sell their best mares and breed from the worst than there has been previously?—There was always that tendency, I think it is intensified now on account of the agricultural depression, the farmers are very depressed of late owing to the bad prices.

2904. Could you describe the general class of mares in your district?—There are some little stout mares with a good deal of the Clydesdale blood, about 15 hands; and then you have mares with a little more breeding in them about 15-3, and so on; and then you have a lot of weedy mares got by thoroughbred horses, too light; they have not been sold, and the farmers keep them for breeding; and they will send these light mares to a heavier horse if they want to breed again, perhaps a Clydesdale horse; and these little stout mares they send to the thoroughbred horse just mate them as well as they can. They know a horse very well these farmers.

2905. Lord RATHDONNELL.—How many stallions have you kept usually down in your place?—I have five stallions just now.

2906. What are they?—I have three Hackneys, one thoroughbred, and one strong Yorkshire coaching horse; but these last three years I have hired some of them into England on account of the depression in breeding.

2907. Have you bred many horses yourself?—No; just a few Hackneys.

2908. You are a Scotchman, I think?—Yes, sir.

2909. What district of Scotland?—Ayrshire.

2910. Have you any experience of breeding there?—Yes.

2911. What class of horses?—They were nearly all Clydesdales in the district I come from.

2912. Have you ever lived in the south of Ireland?—No; but I have lived in Norfolk. I was in practice in Norfolk for some time when a young man.

2913. There I suppose you came in contact with the Norfolk trotting horse and Hackney?—Yes; but I rather prefer the Yorkshire to the Norfolk; they have more breeding in their foundation.

2914. But you have no experience at all of the south of Ireland or the class of mare bred there?—No.

2915. I suppose you have come across some south of Ireland mares that have been brought northward by buyers?—Remarkably few.

2916. Have you ever sold any of the produce of your Hackney stallions?—No; they are young ones.

2917. Have you ever tried to sell any?—Well, I tried to sell one filly when she was two years old; but I did not get a sufficient offer for her.

2918. That is all you have tried?—Yes.

2919. You mentioned, I think, that there are half-bred stallions standing in and about Downpatrick?—Yes.

2920. What stamp of horse is that?—They are generally about 16 hands or 16.1, and, as a rule, they are very good-looking horses. There is a strain of horses called the Harkaways, and it is remarkable how they have maintained their characteristics. I have known them for the last thirty years.

2921. Do you know anything about the breeding of those, how they are bred, what crossing?—These Harkaway horses are put to half-bred mares.

2922. How was Harkaway bred?—They are not what you would call a violent cross; for years they have been bred very much of the same type.

2923. What crossing?—If you go to the foundation it is thoroughbred and Clydesdale; but for the best of our horses they have not made a violent cross. The best of these half-bred horses are not produced by a violent cross.

2924. Then that is not the Harkaway cross?—Yes; the Harkaways have been put to half-bred mares very much like themselves, and they have been able to maintain their characteristics.

2925. I thought you said the Harkaway cross was a good cross?—It is counted the best cross.

2926. And that is a cross you don't approve of—

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Clydesdale and thoroughbred?—Clydesdale and thoroughbred would be the foundation if you would go far enough back.

2927. Mr. CAREW.—What are the mares to which the Harkaways would be put?—The Harkaways are about 16 hands and nearly all chestnut in colour, and they never keep one that does not come true to the type.

2928. Lord RATHDONNELL.—May I ask you how Harkaway was bred?—There was an original blood horse; but Mr. Farrell will be able to give you an account, as he has one.

2929. I understood from you that Harkaway sprung from a Clydesdale and a thoroughbred originally?—They always go back to the Clydesdale to get strength. If you continued to breed to the blood they would get too light, and all our horses would go back to the Clydesdale and thoroughbred.

2930. CHAIRMAN.—Was not Harkaway a thoroughbred?—The original Harkaway; but that is many generations away.

2931. How do they get their name?—They were in the country when I came.

2932. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do I understand you to say that you don't approve of the Clydesdale and that class of heavy horse crossing?—The Clydesdales are rather rough. I would rather increase their strength by something finer than the Clydesdale—something like the Cleveland Bay—and then they would get the strength up without having so much roughness as the Clydesdale.

2933. Do you consider that the Clydesdale, although his bone is, perhaps, to the eye larger than the thoroughbred horse, do you consider his bone is as good as the thoroughbred bone?—The bone is not as good; but they have more bone; it is thicker.

2934. You mean to say the same amount of bone in the one would weigh heavier in the other?—In the carthorse it is more spongy; more liable to fly. The Clevelands have the hardest bone of any horse of weight; their bone is nearly as hard as the thoroughbred, and the cross with them and bloods are about the most handsome horses. You will see them in Yorkshire.

2935. And you maintain that the bone of the Cleveland is equal to the bone of the thoroughbred?—No, it comes next to it in quality.

2936. You have not bred Clydesdales, have you?—I was bred on a farm where I saw them bred in Scotland.

2937. Have you any experience of the breeding of them?—I was bred up on a farm where they were bred.

2938. Did you find any difficulty as regards their feet, and the bones connected with their feet?—No, the Clydesdales have much better feet than the Shire.

2939. I did not compare them, but did you find any difficulty with their feet?—A little more grease than a thoroughbred horse.

2940. Are they at all liable to side bones?—All heavy horses are liable to side bones.

2941. Then there is more difficulty in keeping a heavy horse on his feet than a lighter animal?—Yes.

2942. You have heard certain half-bred horses mentioned or seen in the evidence given that certain half-bred horses would be acceptable in districts as sires?—Yes, they patronise them very well.

2943. That is with clean legs, good bone, nice action, and so on?—Yes.

2944. If a horse of that description, without any heavy carthorse blood in him was standing in the neighbourhood of Downpatrick, for instance, do you suppose the farmers of that district would patronise that horse in preference to the heavy carthorse?—It would depend on what kind of a mare they had, if they had a very light mare, and wanted, perhaps, a heavy worker on the farm, they would patronise a Clydesdale horse; another time if they wanted to breed a harness horse they would go to the half-bred one.

2945. Still you yourself would prefer the lighter and sharper horse with good sound bone and action to the Clydesdale?—Yes.

2946. Are there many horses sold out of your district?—Yes, a great number.

2947. At what age are they sold?—They are sold principally as four-year-olds to the dealers.

2948. Where do they come from, are they bred in the country or brought into it?—Mostly bred there, they breed a great number there.

2949. Have you any experience of what they call in the North feeding horses?—Yes.

2950. Then the horses you refer to are not what you call fed horses?—A good many of the better class of farmers keep their horses until they are four years old, that they have bred themselves, and there are other farmers buy horses at three-year-old, feed them during the winter, and sell them at four years.

2951. Where are they sold?—They are sold to dealers to go to England.

2952. From the farm or the fairs?—The better class of horses are sold on the farm, the dealers or their agents come round and buy the better class, and the remainder go to the fair.

2953. Where do they chiefly go to, where are they chiefly bought for?—Most of them go to England.

2954. Do any come South?—Very few, nearly all to England.

2955. I suppose the dealers buy the soundest animals, and leave the unsound ones behind them?—Just so.

2956. That happens in the case of mares?—It does, unfortunately.

2957. Where do they find their mares then for keeping up the breed, do they breed from the unsound ones?—Yes, they breed from all kinds of mares.

2958. Sir T. ESMONDE—Are there any horses bought by foreign dealers in your part of the country?—They come to the fairs sometimes and buy troopers in Saintfield fair.

2959. What price would they give?—A little over £30.

2960. Do they buy many troopers there?—Sometimes they buy a good many, other times you don't see them for awhile again.

2961.—I suppose you have no means of knowing what country they buy for?—Sometimes I hear of the French being there and sometimes the German buyers.

2962. You spoke of American horses, what is your experience of American horses?—My experience as far as it goes is that they are softer than Irish horses, they have not the staying power of Irish horses.

2963. What are they used for?—The heavier class of them for vans, the lighter class for gigs.

2964. Have you ever seen any of them used as carriage horses?—No.

2965. They would not suit carriages?—Yes, an American trotting horse would suit a carriage very well.

2966. But you don't get many American trotting horses I fancy?—No, they are common bred.

2967. You think them decidedly inferior to ours?—All the animals I have met are inferior.

2968. Are they as sound as our horses?—Yes, they are fairly sound, I suppose it would not pay them to send unsound ones.

2969. Legs good?—Pretty good legs to look at them, don't wear so well as they look.

2970. But you think that the importation of these horses has injuriously affected the horse trade?—Oh, yes.

2971. Have you any idea what the number of American horses imported would be annually?—I have seen returns but I forget, they are selling an enormous number in London just now, about a month ago they sold as many as 300 Canadian horses in one day near the Islington market.

2972. Do you know are any of these horses bought by the English Government?—I am not aware of it.

2973. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said you have been over 30 years in Downpatrick?—I have.

2974. Do you remember a horse belonging to Lord Charlemont, "Broad Arrow"?—He never came our way, I never saw him.

2975. Have you seen much of his produce?—No.

2976. But you have had experience of Hackneys, you say, when you were in Norfolk?—Yes.

2977. Is it your experience that they are soft horses or not?—I think the Norfolk horses are softer than the Yorkshire.

2978. Do you think the Yorkshire horses are at all deficient in staying power?—I do not.

2979. Would you be inclined to register any other horse except the thoroughbred horses that are registered now?—Yes.

2980. What would you register?—I would register a horse with 4 or 5 blood crosses, if he were a real hunter in shape, I would register him as a hunter sire.

2981. Would you register a horse like that without his being proved to be a good stock-getter or not?—He would be better if he were proved, but that would be a difficult thing to do.

2982. Would you also register pure bred Hackneys and Clydesdales and coach horses?—Yes, and I would give prizes to Irish bred ones that were graded up until they were sufficiently pure to stamp their own characteristics on their progeny.

2983. And you believe that a horse bred in Ireland of whatever breed, can be bred much better than they are in England, that you can produce better horses?—I have seen better horses in Yorkshire than I have ever seen in Ireland.

2984. To what do you attribute that?—They breed them purer, when you go to a Yorkshire farmer he has his Hackney mare, and puts her to a Hackney horse and he puts his Cleveland mare to a Cleveland horse, and he feeds them better.

2985. The Yorkshire farmer is a good deal richer than the Irish farmer as a rule?—That partly accounts for it.

2986. What is the size of the farms or valuations of the farmers who breed horses chiefly in your district?—Some of them that have not more than fifteen acres would breed horses, and then those that have two or three hundred acres would keep three or four mares for breeding.

2987. Do you think that it would be possible to stop those smaller people from breeding horses?—No, they have a great taste for breeding horses.

2988. Then you think if any public encouragement is given they are as deserving of it as the larger people?—Certainly.

2989. And you think the people who occupy the small farms are competent to form an opinion as to what horses suit their requirements?—They are fairly good judges of horses.

2990. Have you thought at all how you would take the opinion of those people with regard to any public grant made for the improvement of horses, how would you ascertain from them what kind of horse they would like?—You see what they do patronise and I can form an opinion of what they would like, they choose their horses according to the kind of mare they have.

2991. They do that now, they mate their mares well?—Yes, fairly well as a rule, but the mares are not good enough.

2992. And of your stallions at present which do you find most in demand?—Well the "Romeo" horse, the 16 hands Yorkshire Hackney by Lord Derby has been very largely patronised.

2993. Are his stock good?—Yes, very good, very even.

2994. And you think that a Hackney is more liable to produce an even class of stock from the mares in your district than a thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

2995. I think you said that you had seen some foals selling at a very small price lately?—Yes, I have seen them selling at smaller prices of late than ever I saw since I came to Ireland.

2996. Were they by any particular horses or all kinds of foals?—All kinds of foals are selling low just now, especially light ones.

2997. Is it a fact that the light mares by thoroughbred horses that are kept by farmers to breed from are very often kept because they have been unsaleable?—Yes.

2998. Do you think that the thoroughbred horse is at all as likely to produce action with certainty as a Hackney?—No.

2999. What is your opinion as to the soundness or unsoundness of horses in your district, do you think unsoundness is increasing or the reverse?—I don't think it is increasing, the stallions are fairly sound.

3000. You think the stallions are fairly sound?—They are fairly sound and they counteract the tendency to unsoundness in the mares.

3001. Would you be in favour of requiring a stallion owner to take out a licence of soundness?—Yes, it would be a very good thing.

3002. You think that would be greatly in favour of the public?—Yes, but in our country they soon judge whether a stallion is breeding them sound or not, they go to the fairs and it is all discussed and if a stallion is breeding them unsound they soon quit him.

3003. Is there practically a show of stallions in the fairs?—Yes, in the early season they bring them out to show them.

3004. And the farmers discuss whether the stallion is sound or not?—They discuss more whether the produce is sound.

3005. You think at any rate that the mares in your district if they went on breeding from the thoroughbred horse would breed the stock too light?—They would.

3006. CHAIRMAN.—Those farmers you speak of who sell horses from three to four years old, where do those horses come from?—They are mostly bred in the county, and sometimes they go up to Mullingar and those fairs and bring them down and feed them.

3007. They don't come from the south, any of them?—Some of them might come from the south, but they are mostly bred in the county Down.

3008. About these foreign horses, I am not quite clear that I understand exactly what your opinion is, do you think that the price of horses has been knocked down in your district by the general free trade in horses, that is to say, by the importation of foreign horses into Ireland?—Oh, certainly.

3009. Not specially by the importation of foreign horses into your district?—No.

3010. Do you know whether foreign mares are bought in your district to breed from?—No, they are not.

3011. Then it is merely the general effect upon the market that you complain of?—Yes.

3012. And you don't think a sound thoroughbred sire suitable for your district?—Oh, yes, they are very suitable; they would get some very good ones, but they will get a lot of light ones too. When they come strong enough they will sell perhaps better than any, but they are very uncertain; they always throw a number of light ones that are not saleable.

3013. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say that the Yorkshire Hackney is better than the Norfolk?—Yes; there are a great many of the Norfolk Hackneys heavy of their head, short of their neck, and heavy of their shoulder.

3014. But they don't go on their heads. Their legs and conformation generally?—The limbs of the Yorkshire is harder; there is more blood in the foundation of him.

3015. You have lived in Norfolk, you say?—I have lived sometime in Norfolk.

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3016. Have you ever lived in Yorkshire?—No; but I have spent sometimes a fortnight at a time seeing the shows.

3017. But you have no practical experience of the Yorkshire Hackney except what you bought yourself?—I have seen hundreds of them in Yorkshire.

3018. Made it your business to inspect them?—Just go round looking at them.

3019. When you talk of the Yorkshire bred horse, to what class do you refer, hunters or harness, putting Hackneys out of the question?—They breed all kinds in Yorkshire, hunters, Yorkshire coaching horses, Clevelands, and Shires.

3020. Now, as regards the hunter class of horses that you have had experience of in Yorkshire, have you ever heard it said that the Yorkshire horse deteriorated in latter years?—No. I went over several years to see the Great Yorkshire Show, and I observed in every year an improvement in the Yorkshire Hackney horse, they are getting more quality.

3021. Hackney?—Yes, an improvement in the Hackney.

3022. I mean as regards hunters?—I have no experience except at the shows, and they certainly showed very good hunting horses at the shows.

3023. But you never heard that the hunting class had deteriorated there?—I saw it in the newspapers yesterday, that is all I know of it.

3024. Have the produce of your Hackneys fetched high prices?—They have brought very even prices; not so high as some of the thoroughbreds and not so low as some of the thoroughbreds, more even; not so many light ones.

3025. What age are they sold at?—They are sold at four year old.

3026. The produce of your present stallions?—Yes.

3027. What prices now did they fetch?—The good ones of them brought £50 and fairly good mares about £32, but the prices have been falling ever since the produce of my Hackney horses came into the country; the prices have been going altogether against them; the depreciation in prices commenced as my young ones were coming into market, so it was unfortunate.

3028. You have not realised as much as you expected?—The prices are not nearly as good as when I bought those horses first; if the prices had been maintained these horses would have been more successful.

3029. You say a great many horses for feeding purposes are brought from Mullingar and other fairs, you consider that south, don't you?—Yes.

3030 Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Could you, do you think, with any cross, breed a weighty draught horse in your country?—Yes, if you take the heaviest of the mares and put them to a Shire or Clydesdale on the better class of farms they could breed a weighty horse.

3031. Would it be one of those brewer's dray horses or a light van horse?—None of our mares would breed heavy enough for the brewers, but they would breed van horses.

3032. And light van horses?—They might breed a heavy one.

3033. And bus horses?—Yes.

3034. You would not get much beyond that, would you?—No.

3035. You say there has been a great falling off in the demand for horses on account of these American horses in the price, and therefore that practically means the demand—do you think that this utility horse is being interfered with by the cycling?—Yes, I do.

3036. Then you think that very possibly the demand for these medium draft horses will get less instead of more?—That will depend on how the automotors are patronised.

3037. But there is undoubtedly a falling off in the price and demand for the lighter draught horses?—Oh, a very serious falling off in price, that has been going on for the last two years or more—the last four years.

3038. Mr. CAREW.—Do you know any of the prices which these American horses fetched at the sale at Islington which you attended?—Oh, yes; about £30.

3039. What ages were they?—About four or five year old.

3040. Was there any other country exhibited horses for sale?—Russian ponies.

3041. What were they like?—Miserable looking animals.

3042. What did they fetch?—Very low prices.

3943. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think that a Hackney stallion crossed with the light mares in your country would tend to produce a stronger and more useful mare from which valuable animals could be bred afterwards?—Yes, I do.

3044. Do you think other stallions are more calculated than a Hackney to produce that result?—From a pure bred Cleveland you would get a heavier animal with more quality, but you would lack the beautiful action of the Hackney.

3045. Is the Cleveland at all as well ribbed up as the Hackney?—Not as a rule, but they are leveller and more muscular in their quarters.

3046. More blood quarters?—They are leveller than blood horses with longer quarters.

3047. You have been among the Yorkshire farmers and seen their studs?—I have.

3048. And found them an intelligent people?—A very horsey people.

3049. Do you know why they have begun to give up breeding the coaching horse and to breed Hackneys to a greater extent?—It is because of the showy action of the Hackneys; there is more demand for the Hackneys.

3050. They have given up the coaching horse, a type of horse that Messrs. East used to buy, because they found it pays better to breed Hackneys?—There is more demand for them.

3051. You said the price of your horses had fallen for the last four years, I suppose that applies to all horses?—Yes.

3052. And other horses have fallen in a corresponding or greater degree?—Yes.

3053. And the horses below that class very often are almost unsaleable at present?—Yes, almost unsaleable.

3054. CHAIRMAN.—You know Yorkshire pretty well?—I have been through a great deal of it.

3055. I gather from what you said, that although you have seen it in the newspapers stated that the Yorkshire hunter breed has deteriorated that that is not your opinion from your personal observation?—Not at the shows—they show very good hunters.

3056. Assuming that these motor cars and such inventions are successful, and that the demand continues to decrease for these general utility horses, what breed of horses do you think would take their place in your district?—I don't quite comprehend your question.

3057. Well, you said that the demand is falling off for the general utility horse, but I suppose you would admit that the demand for very high class hunters and carriage horses generally is not falling off, is it?—No; I believe that they will have to breed from their very best mares to supply a good class.

3058. In your district if the demand decreases it will cease to pay to breed the general utility horse?—It has ceased to pay to breed a low class of horse.

3059. What horse could be bred with advantage?—The very highest class of horse, a hunter or carriage horse.

3060. Would your district be suitable to produce that kind of horse?—Yes.

3061. And would you recommend the Hackney horse as the best sire for the production of that class?—For the production of the harness horse I would, but for hunters I would prefer the thoroughbred horse.

3062. Lord ASHTOWN.—Have you got the mares in your district at present to produce this high class

of hunter and harness horse?—We have a few mares, but not many.

3063. But the general run of the mares?—They would not be good enough.

3064. CHAIRMAN.—You said in reply to Mr. Wrench that, taken in Yorkshire, they have to breed the Hackneys because it pays better, that is to say there is more demand I suppose for a horse with showy action?—Yes.

3065. In your opinion is the Hackney principally valuable on account of the showy action, or is it valuable also on account of other qualities?—Yes, he is very good both for quality and endurance and action; the Yorkshire Hackney is the best I think.

3066. Lord RATHDONNEL.—With regard to high class harness horses, have Messrs. East and Messrs. Wimbush stated that they did not like the cross of the Hackney, and preferred the thoroughbred cross in their high class harness horses, would you take their opinion or not?—I would not.

3067. Although they spend several thousands of pounds in the country, you would not be afraid of losing those thousands?—No, I would not.

3068. This is the letter from Messrs. East and Co. —"Replying to your letter of the 1st inst., we do not think we can do better than repeat the letter we wrote last year about this time in answer to a similar inquiry, which was as follows:—In our opinion the introduction of Hackney stallions into Ireland for the purpose of breeding carriage horses would be most disastrous in its effects to the business in young horses now done by that country. We believe it would result in a greatly inferior stamp of horses being produced unsuitable for carriage horses such as we require. And our experience with regard to Yorkshire horses confirms this, as we find since the Hackney stallions were introduced there that we can obtain but a very small number of our horses from that country. We hold that it is most essential the sire should be thoroughbred, but with good action rather than speed." Now, Messrs. Wimbush and Son say—"We beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter. The fine handsome, well-bred bay carriage horse for which Yorkshire was so famous in our recollection, is very rarely to be met with now, while formerly nearly all our best London carriage horses came from Yorkshire and were bred there. We attribute this decline to the introduction of Hackney stallions, and we should be sorry to see them introduced into Ireland, as that country still produces a fair number of first-class carriage horses, and if Hackney stallions take the place of the thoroughbred sire, we have no doubt but that a similar decline of valuable carriage horses will be the result." They spend a great deal of money in Ireland in buying. Do you think is there any fear of our losing that money if we use the Hackney stallion?—No, I think not. The Hon. Somerset Ward drives a pair of Hackneys got by "Romeo," half-bred ones, and they are by far the prettiest that come into Downpatrick. There is a style about them that you will not see in those got by a thoroughbred sire.

3069. Then you would place your opinion against that of Messrs. East and Wimbush?—I believe they are wrong in their estimate of the Yorkshire Hackney.

3070. Although they buy the article?—Yes.

3071. Mr. WRENCH.—But is it not a fact that the Yorkshire men have given up breeding coach horses because they did not find it pay?—I heard so, that there was more demand for the Hackneys when I was there.

3072. Do you know as a matter of fact that there used to be a large trade with America in Yorkshire coach horses, chiefly through Steriker Brothers, and that that has been given up?—Yes, and they were very beautiful horses. The prettiest horses I have ever seen in my life were the Yorkshire coaching horses.

3073. Do you think Hackneys are at all likely to take the place of thoroughbred sires, or will they be only used with mares that thoroughbreds would not suit?—I think they would be used with mares suitable to them.

3074. And the mares with which Hackneys would be used would not be suitable for thoroughbred sires?—They would send heavier mares to thoroughbred horses generally.

3075. Therefore you do not think the fear that Hackneys will take the place of thoroughbreds will be realised?—I think not.

3076. And is not the trade of Messrs. East and Wimbush and men who buy 16 hands horses in your county comparatively small compared with the trade carried on by other men, such as Mr. Hothersall and other dealers?—Yes, the parties you speak of don't buy many in our county; you don't hear their names mentioned.

3077. Mr. Hothersall buys largely?—Yes.

3078. The CHAIRMAN.—These letters refer of course to the whole of Ireland, and I gather from you that you attribute the falling off, of which they complain in Yorkshire, in the class of carriage horses which they require to the fact that, there being a greater demand for the Hackney, the attention of the people has been directed to breeding Hackneys rather than to other classes of horses?—Yes.

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3079. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Down, I think?—Yes, sir.

3080. In what part of the county?—I live in East Down.

3081. Have you any experience yourself in horse-breeding?—I have been breeding horses or taking a deep interest in horses for more than 20 years.

3082. Do you breed horses yourself?—I do.

3083. What class of horses do you breed?—I breed from thoroughbreds and half-breds with a slight stain in them, nearly thoroughbred, and lately from a Clydesdale.

3084. Do you judge at Horse Shows sometimes?—I do.

3085. In England as well as in Ireland?—No; I have only judged at Banbridge and Downpatrick; Banbridge is a very large show, but Downpatrick is a local one, and I have been through all Lecale judging green crops on farms, and I was always looking about me to see what I could and learn what I could.

3086. Are you pretty well acquainted with horse-breeding through Ireland?—Not all through Ireland but the North. I have been at Ballinasloe.

3087. Do you know the South?—I do, I have been up here two or three times, and Ballinasloe twice, and at the Moy once a year anyway.

3088. Do you farm yourself?—I farm.

3089. Do you breed for your own use on your farm or to sell?—I mostly have two or three mares having foals every summer.

3090. I think you said you breed from a thoroughbred?—I do, a half-bred and a Clydesdale; I mostly take one from each, or sometimes two from the half-bred and one from the thoroughbred, sometimes one each horse.

3091. And what class of mares do you use?—Well, for a Clydesdale horse I use a coarse, rough, strong mare that I think would not suit a thoroughbred, and for a thoroughbred horse I use a Harkaway mare, a long lengthy mare with good bone, wide of her ribs, good

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action, a sweet-looking mare. Then if I have a blood mare I put her to a half-bred horse to bring bone, to what we call half-bred horses that have either two strains of the thoroughbred on the dam or the sire's side.

3092. What do you do with the produce of the Clydesdale?—I work him on the farm or sometimes sell him for a cart. We have a sort of a mare, a good, short-legged, strong mare, we call an Irish cart mare, and we can breed a very good cart horse from that sort of mare, and there is a very good demand for them for heavy work in Belfast, not just the very heaviest but middling, up to two tons.

3093. At what age do you sell the produce?—Four years old, sometimes five.

3094. What price do you get?—We used to get a little better price, but if we had a good horse we could still get the better price. I have got £75, and £40 or £35 would be about the lowest.

3095. What do you do with the produce of the thoroughbred sires?—I try to sell it either as a harness horse or a hunter, if not good enough for a hunter it mostly makes a harness horse.

3096. And the same I suppose with the blood mare and the thoroughbred horse?—Yes, my lord.

3097. And which pays you best?—Both pay equally well, I don't breed just exactly thoroughbreds. I had one last year and I have one this year, but you see when we cross the thoroughbred horse ——

3098. I don't mean the thoroughbred; but which pays you best of the others?—If you could breed a good hunting horse it would pay the best.

3099. Is it a good district for horse-breeding, in your opinion, that you live in?—It is very good.

3100. And a good quality of soil; what is the soil?—Heavy clay, and some of it light, and some of it touches limestone a little, and our farms are pretty well cultivated. We go in a good deal for green crops, and use bone manure, and I think it helps the bone of the animal besides when it comes to graze on it.

3101. What kind of mares have the farmers?—Good, useful, short-legged mares, with plenty of bone, very hardy, about 15.3, some of them a little more.

3102. Do you buy yourself any mares in any part of the country?—None, unless if I got a good hunter broken down. We cannot afford to go in for expensive mares; we would like to do it.

3103. Is it the custom to breed from two-year-olds?—Well, we do in our district.

3104. What is your opinion about that?—Well, we have bred some very good animals from two-year-olds and three-year-olds. I would not like to be longer starting to breed than three-year-old, and then you can take a couple of foals; and sometimes you are inclined to sell the mare, and you have a couple of good foals left. Sometimes they breed from them at four-year-old, and you have a foal at five. Breeding from a two-year-old is very severe on the mare; it takes her a year to come up again, but on the three-year-old it is not so severe.

3105. How is your district off for stallions?—We are well supplied.

3106. With suitable stallions?—Well, they are pretty good all over, generally speaking; there are some not.

3107. What are they?—We have some half-breds not just the thing, and some Clydesdales not the thing, but still they breed some of them pretty well. Whenever they don't breed the people have to part with them, for they don't get anything to do. Our farming people out there are pretty apt to know very soon what sort a horse suits for, and they don't very often follow up a middling horse.

3108. Are there any Hackney stallions in your district?—We had a few, but they were not very successful in my immediate neighbourhood, and I think they hardly paid their way.

3109. Are there any there now?—None in our immediate neighbourhood, none nearer than Downpatrick; we used to have them within about a mile of us, but they have ceased to keep them; they would not take the place of the Harkaway horses.

3110. Are there any cart-horse sires?—We have some very good cart-horses in the neighbourhood; we have three Clydesdales or four; we have one Clydesdale got by the famous Clydesdale horse, "The Prince of Wales"; we have another, a very good one, and they are all breeding pretty well.

3111. You think their produce is successful?—I do; where land is hilly and hard to labour, it takes you to have strong horses on the farm or you could not work it.

3112. You think, on the whole, from your experience, that the mares in the district are improving?—Deteriorating.

3113. How do you account for that?—Well, now, they have to be turned into money; the people cannot afford to keep them, that is just all there is about it, and the people have ceased to breed lately; they are not breeding so much as they did.

3114. Why is that?—In the first place, I suppose, the mares not being so good they did not get just as good an animal; and the middling-priced horse has gone down, while I think the high-priced horse is just as dear as ever, if we could get them. I was in the last Moy fair, and if you had the right good horse you would get as much money as ever.

3115. But the medium horses have gone down in price?—They have.

3116. Can you account for that?—I think the mares are not so good.

3117. When I said that the prices had gone down I meant the prices had gone down, the quality of the animal remaining the same?—Well, you know you can't always breed a good one, and for a misfit you used to get a middling good price, and now if you have a misfit you cannot get any price at all. Troopers last year in our neighbourhood were brought at £16 to £22 or £23; the men that got that won't breed any more. If the Government would come and give us £30 or £35 we would breed more.

3118. How do you define a half-bred horse—what do you consider a half-bred?—The Harkaway horse you heard mentioned there by Mr. Dunlop I could give you the outline of, with your permission. That is our half-bred in Ulster; that is the horse that has kept the people in their places in the County Down—he has paid the rent all the time. "The King of Trumps," a thoroughbred horse, came to Ireland about sixty years ago; he was shipwrecked on the way, and came here blind. He was crossed with a sort of Irish mare. I know the descendant of the man that had the mare that the horse was crossed with, and from the cross came a chestnut horse, and that is what they call a Harkaway; and that horse has been crossed with a good sort of mare, and then they sometimes turn back to the thoroughbred mare, and that is how we keep up the character of the half-bred horse, but the great mistake was that there was no stud book got up for him. If there had been a stud book for that Harkaway breed so that they could be sold in America and other places—I could have sold some myself in America if they were registered in any stud book.

3119. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation in your district?—But little, not much.

3120. Has it had any effect?—It had an effect where they give prizes to mares more than to the sires, because we have enough of private enterprise to get plenty of sires; gentlemen in the neighbourhood bring the sires and speculate in them, looking to them to pay them without any prizes.

3121. You think the scheme of the Dublin Society has had a good effect?—It has where it was given to the mares and of course to the sires as well.

3122. Have you had any experience as to the effect of the importation of foreign horses?—It has hurt the price of low-priced horses.

3123. In your opinion has it hurt the price of high-class hunters and harness horses?—Not so much, unless where they alter them and bring them down to your show as hunters and send them over to England, it hurts the price of them then and that has been done.

3124. Do you sell horses in England?—I sold one last year; a young horse, I went over to the Hunters' Improvement Show with a young horse, a Harkaway horse.

3125. You sold him there?—I sold him, it is not matured enough yet, the classes are not properly defined; I exhibited him in the sire class as a two-year-old, and I was exhibiting him against older horses that were castrated, and I had not just the right chance; he was in the wrong class, but I think it will come right in the end.

3126. You yourself have had no experience of the breeding from Hackneys?—None, I don't touch them.

3127. And they are not bred from in your district?—A little, not much; I have seen some of them crossed with a good thoroughbred mare, or a nearly thoroughbred, with good enough results.

3128. What is your opinion of the produce?—I think the first cross with a very good mare would do well enough, but I would not approve of a second cross; I have an example not very far off me, and I don't think in the second cross the foals will be as good.

3129. Do you think it pays to breed in your district as well as it used to?—I think, my lord, if we could breed a good horse, as I said before, it would pay as well as ever, we would get as much if we could get the good animal, and there are some very good animals in our district at the present time, young horses.

3130. Have you any suggestions to make as to how it could be made to pay better?—Well, there is one suggestion I would make, even in the buying of troopers—if the Government came nearer to the breeder in some way or other to give him a better price, people would be inclined to breed, and in breeding troopers they might get a good one out among the rest, because you cannot breed them all good; but unless the Government come nearer the people they will get very few troopers in the district I am in, or in the County Down.

3131. You think the Government should buy direct?—I do, because I think the dealer sometimes gets as much profit as the farmer for keeping him four years. A friend of mine sold a trooper for £22, five off, perfectly sound, never had a collar on his neck; that man has a very good mare but would not think of putting her to a horse again—he is disgusted.

3132. Lord RATHDONNEL.—Mr. Dunlop, I think, stated that he thought Clydesdale and thoroughbred was the foundation of the Harkaway blood, do you consider that is the correct theory?—I think Mr. Dunlop made a mistake, because he did not know, he is not that long in the country; that statement is wrong of course.

3133. But he did not mean to make it?—No, sir. The first Harkaway was from a thoroughbred horse, and what we call an old Irish mare.

3134. You don't know the breeding of the mare?—I do not; it is I suppose over fifty years ago; but a strong old-fashioned mare, a short-legged mare, I believe—I got a description of the mare—a good sort of mare; I was not old enough to know the gentleman that owned the horse, but I knew the family. He used to ride this thoroughbred and drive him, and was as blind as a bat; and he would drive him twenty miles, and throw his head up in the frost and leave him there, and then drive back again from Belfast, twenty miles, and not hurt him—he was blind as a bat. "King of Trumps" was the first foundation of the Harkaways.

3135. Out of an old Irish stamp of mare?—Yes.

3136. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I should like just to ask you with reference to the troopers, you say that there are a certain number of misfits—you are always naturally trying to breed to the highest possible standard, or ought to be?—That is what we want to get at.

3137. And every man who breeds, breeds with the view of getting the best animal he can?—Yes.

3138. Then you have what you call a misfit that does not run up to that standard, an animal that may be is perfectly sound, but not of a good appearance to command a high price. For that misfit what price do you expect to get?—He might get £70 or £80, or you might get £100, and then if he is not a good looking animal he turns in for a trooper if he is sound; they won't take anything that is not sound.

3139. You say the troopers have been selling from £16 to £25 to Government?—Yes, or the man who bought them for the Government.

3140. Do you know what Government they were sold to?—I believe to the English.

3141. To the English Government dealer or the English remount agent?—Whatever dealer buys them for the English Government.

3142. Where were they sold?—He comes round to people's houses; he picks up what we called a runner or guinea hunter, who charges him £1 1*s.* for taking him to a horse; he comes to Downpatrick and goes round for twenty or thirty miles of the country, and buys the horses as cheap as he can from the farmers.

3143. They are like the rest of the people, buy as cheap as they can?—If the Government wants to encourage us they must give more than that.

3144. Do you know that the English Government hardly ever buys a trooper north of the Boyne?—I did not.

3145. What class of horses are you speaking of, were they riding horses, or draught horses, or calculated for both work?—Principally riding, they would do both work; but there were good backs to them, good strong legs, and fair action.

3146. They were riding horses?—Yes, but not good enough to make a hunter, not enough quality about them.

3147. Then you think nearly anything you breed is good enough to be a trooper?—If it is sound.

3148. What price would you propose should be given for these troopers?—I think if they would give the breeder from £30 to £35 he would try and breed them.

3149. Would anybody try and breed a trooper?—I think they would on the chance of having a good one.

3150. And then they would not give it to the Government?—Oh, no.

3151. It is very like trying to breed a polo pony; no man would try to breed a trooper unless he was under a lien to Government, and if it was a good one he would sell it for a higher price elsewhere; but if he is a misfit, he is good enough to go as a trooper to Government?—If it is sound.

3152. Mr. CAREW.—What you mean is, if you breed a hunter you are not going to give it to the Government, you don't want to set up the army on hunters?—No.

3153. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You would give them your rubbish, but you ask them to come forward and support you, and put the money in your pocket for doing so?—It is not rubbish, and unless they give us some encouragement, we won't give them anything at all.

3154. Mr. CAREW.—You mean if the Government gave you £70 or £80 for your hunter you would sell it to them?—Yes, or even £50.

3155. But you would like to get £35 for horses useful as troopers?—Yes.

3156. Have you any of the Harkaway blood in your district?—Yes, we have three or four sires left; I don't say that they are as good as the first, but we try to keep them as good as we can.

3157. If one of those Harkaway mares were mated

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with a good thoroughbred with size and substance, do you think it would reproduce those qualities?—That is the way we get the best hunters, from a thoroughbred mare and a Harkaway horse, or a thoroughbred horse and a Harkaway mare; but we prefer the Harkaway mare, because they give strength.

3158. You would approve of registering a sire, like the Harkaway, half-bred?—Certainly; I think they deserve it as much as the thoroughbred.

3159. You say that Hackneys have been bred in your district, and lately they are not popular; they are being discouraged?—They are being discouraged, we may be wrong, every man has his own opinion; we consider them rather soft, and we consider the Cleveland a soft horse.

3160. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Would you say there were any of the old Irish breed of mare left in your country?—Very little, we still have a little remnant—we have some very good mares, no doubt about it; some men are inclined to keep as good mares as ever they did, and you would wonder at the produce of some of these middling mares.

3161. Would you approve of a system of registering this old breed of Irish mares?—I would; something like the way the Hunter Improvement Society are doing.

3162. On the question of army remounts, are there any troopers bought by foreigners in your district?—Any of the foreigners that buy them in our district the local dealer mostly gets them first; there is such a man as Haffiner, he gives a good price, and is worth breeding one for—he gives up to £100; the foreigners take most of our good mares away.

3163. Mr. WRENCH.—You say you would be in favour of establishing a Stud Book like that of the Hunter Improvement Society?—Like that.

3164. Would you lay down any definite number of crosses that you think necessary?—I would like two or three crosses of blood on the dam's side or the sire's side, take two of blood.

3165. On the dam's side or sire's side you would not mind which?—Either.

3166. And you think if such a Stud Book or register was established it would put up the price of half-bred horses?—All I know is I could have sold some horses I had in America, an American friend wrote to me, and could have sold them well for me; but they were not registered in any Stud Book and they would not have them in America.

3167. Therefore if they had been registered you could have sold them?—Yes, for two or three times as much as I could get at home.

3168. Talking of America, I think you said there were some American horses in the Dublin Show?—I am certain there were, it would not be right for me to name any names.

3169. I should not ask you?—I know there were American horses sold in Dublin Show as Irish hunters and had Irish pedigrees.

3170. And their tails cut off?—A friend of mine bought one in Belfast, gave a very low price for it, he took it to England and sold it as an Irish horse for £60 of profit in a few months, and in every English fair lately there have been a few Americans sold as Irish horses; I hold that spoils the character of these horses, because in the hunting field they have not the same stamina as our horses at all.

3171. With reference to the Hackneys in your district, where were they stationed?—Mr. Dunlop's is the nearest now; the Derryboy stud paddocks have tried them once or twice, they don't keep them now, that is Mr. Lindsay, of Derryboy, near Crossgar.

3172. They are not there now?—No.

3173. But you don't know whether they were pure Hackneys?—I could give the pedigree of one shown as pure in Belfast, "Sir William," bred by Alec Morton, and in the yearling class at that same Show I think we had two Hackneys.

3174. The CHAIRMAN.—Are you speaking of stallions standing at these places?—Yes, this was one of them; I think he went last year to Glasgow.

3175. Mr. WRENCH.—This was one of the horses whose produce they did not care about?—They did not, and he was the best shouldered one I ever saw, but he did not seem to take with the people.

3176. Did he win any prizes in Belfast?—He got a third. If he had been a success in the way of getting mares I don't think he would be away, because there are none of us very apt to part with anything that pays.

3177. That was the only Hackney horse there?—He had a little Yorkshire trotter there, "The Squire," sometime ago, a very nice looking horse he was.

3178. Lord RATHDONNEL.—In answering Mr. Wrench with regard to registration, don't you mean that you would register the stallion and not all the produce of the stallion?—I don't think it would be necessary to register the produce of the stallion unless some of the produce wanted to be kept as a sire; if you wanted to keep the produce as a sire you would have to register it to keep it for a half-bred horse.

3179. Do you mean to say you would register anything that had not proved himself to be a good animal?—Indeed I don't think I would.

3180. Therefore you would not register all the produce?—I would not.

3181. But you would register a stallion although half-bred if he proved himself to be a good foalgetter?—Yes; but I don't think I would register any stallion with too much of the Clydesdale in him.

3182. The matter of registration would have, I suppose, to be left to some competent Board, you would not object to that?—Oh, no.

3183. If a competent Board was formed, and they came to the conclusion that the foals and produce of a certain half-bred stallion were good and decided to register him, that is what you would like to see done?—Yes, my lord.

3184. But you don't mean indiscriminate registration of produce?—No.

3185. Lord ASHTOWN.—Even if you were selling this produce, how would you be able to prove that it was the produce out of a registered sire and registered dam in America, for instance?—That would be a trouble again, I suppose, the body could decide that better than I can tell you now.

3186. Lord RATHDONNEL.—Under the scheme of registration that I asked you about there would not be such a thing as a registered dam?—No, there would be nothing of the sort.

3187. There would be no registered dam, all you would register would be the horse that proved himself to be a good foal getter, is that what you mean?—That is all I mean.

3188. Lord ASHTOWN.—Would you be in favour of registering mares?—I think if the mare was from a thoroughbred horse or from something good, you may go a little back, but not too far. I don't know exactly how stud books are got up, if I did I would have one got up long ago.

3189. Sir T. ESMONDE.—If it could be discovered there were any of these old Irish mares left, would you be in favour of having some kind of registration of them?—I would if you could get them.

3190. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think you could get them?—It would be a question, I think it would be hard to get.

3191. Lord RATHDONNEL.—Don't you think it would be very costly?—It would.

3192. Sir T. ESMONDE.—With reference to the American horses and their being sold as Irish horses in the English market, do you think it would be a good thing to brand them?—I think they should be sold for what they are, if they are American horses let them be sold as such. When they came here first it was who should get them. Now they have to be sold under cover. You heard Mr. Inglis quoted; I know a number of people who had American horses, and they would not have them at all now.

3193. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you think those American mares are bought at all to breed from in the country?—I could not say, if you got a good mare it might; I don't know much about them, but I don't think they should be sold as Irish horses if that could be managed; if we had a fair field to fight them it would help our position greatly.

3194. Is there anything you would like to suggest to the Commission as to how breeding can be improved in Ireland generally?—Well, if you could give a little more to the people who keep good mares, begin to give prizes at three year old, because when a mare comes to three year old the people think of selling her; if you gave a premium for good mares, and made a man keep a mare in the country, that would be the only step I could think of at the present time. I think if you could give us any encouragement to keep the mares by good premiums, there is not so much required for the horses, it is mares we want more than anything else.

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Mr. William Farrell.

3195. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you keep more than one horse?—I keep just one.

3196. Lord RATHDONNEL.—The inference drawn from what you have just now said is, that the good mares are drafted out of the country by the farmer having money offered him by dealers?—Yes.

3197. And away goes the good sound mare?—After they come to three year old they are in danger; if there is a prize offered at three year old you have a chance to keep them a few years.

3198. Any scheme that could keep the sound mares in the country would meet your approval?—If you could help us in that way it would.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

SEVENTH DAY.—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH, 1896

Nov. 20, 1896.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, MR. F. S. WRENCH, SIR T. H. G. ESMONDE, M.P., MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P., and MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

B. H. LANE examined.

Mr. B. H. Lane.

3199. CHAIRMAN.—You reside in the county Londonderry?—North Derry.

3200. Do you consider the district you live in a horse-breeding district?—For certain classes of horses.

3201. What classes of horses?—Cart horses and harness horses.

3202. They breed a good many of them, do they?—They do.

3203. Do you breed horses yourself?—I do.

3204. For some time?—Yes, for a good many years off and on.

3205. What class of horses do you breed yourself?—Principally cart horses. The largest car horses we can breed for dray purposes, and for harness purposes we use the Hackneys.

3206. Have you got a stallion of your own?—Not just at present.

3207. And are those the general classes of horses that are bred in that part of the country?—Well, largely, not altogether.

3208. Where are they sold, this class of horse?—The cart horses are principally sold to Scotch dealers, the harness horses are bought by the principal English dealers, local dealers buy them and send them to England.

3209. Then, I take it, that very little attention is turned to the breeding of hunters?—Practically none.

3210. What class of stallion have you kept yourself?—Well, I have had a share in keeping. I never kept a horse entirely on my own account. Generally a few of us together in the neighbourhood get the very best horse we can of his class, and we join together to keep a really good horse. In that way I have owned a horse, had a share in him. We keep the best Clydesdale blood we can get, and also Hackneys.

3211. How long have you had Clydesdale blood in the country?—A long time.

3212. Have you had any stallions of any other breed except the Hackneys and Clydesdale?—Yes, I had a share in a thoroughbred stallion at one time, but he did not take.

3213. And the Clydesdale you use for the cart horse and the Hackney for the Harness horse?—Yes, my lord.

3214. How long have there been Hackneys in the country?—Well, in the immediate neighbourhood, about eight years. Of course Lord Charlemont, in the neighbouring county, had a Hackney a good many years ago, "Broad Arrow." He left a lot of good stock I believe.

3215. Do you know anything of "Broad Arrow's" stock?—I have seen a good many of them.

3216. Do you like them?—Yes, any that I have seen were good.

3217. What Hackney sires have you got now in your neighbourhood?—There is "Yorkshire Post," belonging to Mr. Morton. We had up to recently, when we sold him, a horse called "Trousdale," a Yorkshire bred Hackney, and we had at one time "Excelsior," who was a very celebrated goer.

3218. Before the introduction of these Hackneys how were the harness horses bred?—Well, they were bred from a sort of half-bred horse, some of them were Yorkshire horses, coaching horses I have known to be in the country, said to be Cleveland Bays, whether pure bred or not I would not undertake to say. They were stated to be Cleveland Bays, they were that class of horse, big, clean legged horses of no distinct type

3219. In your opinion is the Hackney superior?—I think so, for the class of mares we have in our country.

3220. What kind of mares have you?—They are rather plain; in fact there is no distinct type of mare in the country. The great want in my opinion is the mares. I think that there should be more encouragement given to try to keep the good mares in the country than there is, because it is the want of good mares that in a great measure is interfering with the breeding of good horses.

3221. Do you think the mares are getting worse?—I don't think they are as good as they were.

3222. Can you attribute that to any known cause?—I think there has been a great foreign demand for good mares; any really good mares are picked up by foreigners at once.

3223. What step could you suggest to induce the farmers to keep their good mares to breed from?—If

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the money that was spent in subsidising the stallions was spent in some way in giving prizes to mares locally, and make it more general. By that I mean to say that the same man should not year after year get the money for the same mare. I think that prevents the small farmers from competing with their mares. I should think that some regulation that would prevent the same mare getting the prize money frequently, or say more than once, would be very useful.

3224. What sized farms are there, generally speaking, about you?—Where I live the farms are very large, from 600 acres down to 100 or 120 acres. In a little distance away the farms get smaller, and average 50 or 60 acres.

3225. Do the smaller class of farmers do much in horse-breeding?—They do; a great many of them always breed a horse.

3226. What class of horses do they use for their own farm work?—A sort of half-bred mare or horse. They use the Clydesdale very largely; there is a good deal of Clydesdale blood in them.

3227. How about prices, have the prices gone up or down of late years?—A good horse is always worth money, but at the present time a middling horse is unsaleable.

3228. Is the good horse worth as much as ever he was?—I think he is, but the middling horse is very hard to sell.

3229. How do you account for that?—I think that there is not the demand, and I think the foreign horses that are brought into the country have cut down what you might call the second or third class horse, say the third class horse, greatly because they come into competition with them and have reduced the prices.

3230. And do you think the introduction of the Hackney sire will increase the value of the produce?—I should think so as a harness horse distinctly.

3231. Give them better action?—Better action. Of course there are Hackneys and Hackneys, as there are horses of all description; some Hackneys I would not breed from at all, but I think a Hackney of a proper description, a big horse with quality and go about him, that he is a really good stamp of horse to breed a harness horse from.

3232. Have you a share in more than one Hackney stallion at present?—No.

3233. Where did you get your horse from?—The last horse that we got that we sold the other day we got him in Yorkshire.

3234. Have you any preference?—I am inclined to think the Yorkshire blood is better than the Norfolk, has more quality.

3235. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation about you?—Not at all. There is a registered stallion under it in the county Derry. I believe, according to the returns, I was looking them up, in Ulster, in the counties Down, Antrim, Derry, Tyrone and Donegal there are 236 stallions and of them only 11 are registered.

3236. How do you account for that?—I think that if it were in the hands of some local society like the North-East Society in Belfast it would be more gone into.

3237. Do you think they would be more likely to register horses if it was all conducted by a local society?—I think there would be more interest taken in it. In the county Derry there are very few thoroughbred stallions at all, in fact just at the present moment I don't know that I know of a thoroughbred stallion standing except perhaps one or so in Derry.

3238. On the whole in your opinion is the class of stallion you have in Derry well suited to the district?—I would not say that at all, because I think if you speak generally there are a good many unsound stallions in use, horses that should not be allowed to serve at all. I have an opinion or view that there should be a licence duty put upon stallions and every man who keeps stallions for hire should have to pay a licence of £10 a year, and if his horse passed a board of veterinary surgeons it should be reduced to 10s.; if he chooses to keep an unsound stallion let him pay for it, there are any quantity of unsound stallions in use.

3239. You think a penalty of that kind would be sufficient to wipe out the unsound stallions?—I think it would go a long way towards it.

3240. Sir T. Esmonde.—On the point of unsound stallions, you have strong views that they are extremely undesirable?—Most undesirable.

3241. And do you think from your experience of the country it is necessary to take steps to deal with that question?—I do indeed, I think it would be a very essential thing if it could be carried out, to ensure sound stallions being used. I may say that when we began to go into horse-breeding we invariably guaranteed the horse, every stallion that we used, to be sound, and had a certificate from two or three veterinary surgeons of his soundness and advertised him to be sound. And that I observe, whether truthfully or not, has been followed in several instances where I see stallions being advertised, at the bottom of their card it says they have been examined by a veterinary surgeon and passed sound.

3242. Was your examination every season?—No, not every season unless we suspected there was something amiss.

3243. Do you think there is much breeding from unsound mares with you?—Indeed I think there is, they are very careless about the mare they use and seem to think anyone is good enough to breed from.

3244. Do you think it is equally important to have a sound mare as it is to have a sound stallion?—Equally.

3245. You would be in favour of some system to remedy that?—I don't see how you can prevent it; if a man chooses to serve his mare, whether she is sound or not, you cannot prevent him; but, with regard to giving premiums, I would insist on sound mares.

3246. You are not aware I suppose of the practice of foreign countries in respect of this question of sound or unsound horses?—No; I have heard that in France there is a duty on stallions, and only sound stallions are licensed.

3247. Mr. La Touche.—You say you think the mares have deteriorated a good deal in your country?—I think they are not as good as they were.

3248. And that there are hardly any thoroughbred stallions that you are aware of in the county?—I really don't know that I could name a thoroughbred stallion in Derry just at present; there may be one or two.

3249. Do you think the mares have deteriorated from the absence of thoroughbred blood?—Well, no; I don't know that it is attributable to that; the good mares are sold because they bring the most money.

3250. I suppose that was always the custom, was it not?—I suppose perhaps it was, but I think the mares are not as good as they were for some reason or other.

3251. But you think there used to be more thoroughbred stallions in the country before the introduction of these Clydesdales?—Well, in my recollection I don't think there were; there was generally one or two thoroughbred stallions.

3252. What was the ordinary sire in the country when the mares were in a better state than they are at present?—A half-bred nondescript sort of horse, as far as I recollect.

3253. What is your definition of a half-bred?—My definition of a half-bred would be from a thoroughbred horse in that line, or from any thoroughbred, a half-bred, I would consider, must be pure on one side, but the half-breds that are in the country are not that at all, they are a sort of nondescript, which, perhaps, would be a better description to give them.

3254. You cannot form any idea how they were bred, the nondescripts you speak of?—I have not any idea at all; I should say they were bred in every way.

3255. What sort of horse do you expect to breed by a Hackney stallion out of the ordinary mare of the country?—Of course your aim is to try and breed the best, you may breed a first-class harness horse, you may breed him, if you don't you will breed a horse that is fit for a van, which is a fairly selling horse, and if he misses that, of course, he is only a trammer.

3256. Do you really expect to breed them big enough for vans?—Certainly, if you breed with the right sort of stallion. I would never think of breeding him under 15.3 or 16 hands.

3257. Do you get Hackney stallions up there 16 hands?—Certainly, the last horse we had was 16 hands high.

3258. Is the mare of the country big enough to produce that sort of animal?—Oh, yes, my experience is that very often a small mare produces the biggest horse.

3259. Mr. WRENCH.—Practically you would divide the mares in your district into mares that are fit to be crossed with a Clydesdale or cart horse, and mares fit to be crossed with a Hackney to produce harness horses?—Yes.

3260. Do you think, with regard to the latter class, if the present mares that exist in the country were crossed with a good Hackney stallion they would in time produce a much better mare in the country if the produce were kept?—I think it would.

3261. When "Excelsior" was crossed with a suitiful mare, did he get good selling stock?—He did, "Excelsior" was a Norfolk bred Hackney, and my opinion about the Norfolk Hackneys is that he requires a better quality of mare than a Yorkshire Hackney. I may say that I bred by "Excelsior" out of a mare that was nearly thoroughbred, she just had a stain in her. I bred a horse that is in Canada, and the *Live Stock Journal* reporter reporting on his trotting said he had action equalled by no horse in any country. I sold him to Graham, of Ontario, and his dam was nearly thoroughbred, a small mare not 15 hands, and he is over 16 hands according to the report in the paper now. I sold him at two-year-old.

3262. Do you remember, I think it was the year before last, a horse or mare second in the heavy weight class in the Dublin Show got by "Excelsior"?—Yes, I knew that mare very well, that mare was on the farm next to my place.

3263. How was that mare bred?—That mare was bred out of a well-bred mare which I believe came from the West of Ireland, and "Excelsior." And I will tell you an extraordinary thing about that, that the year before that the light weight champion hunter in the show in Dublin was out of that mare by a thoroughbred horse, and the next year a mare out of the same mare by the Hackney horse was in the heavy weight class, she was either first or second, I forget which.

3264. Then you think that if the people bought the produce of the Hackney stallions they are suitable to work on the smaller class of farms?—Certainly, none more active.

3265. You said you had a thoroughbred horse there at one time?—Yes, but he was not patronised much.

3266. But a good class of thoroughbred?—We thought him very good.

3267. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—What was he?—A horse called "Citrel," by "Citralite," he had been steeplechased and steeplechased well.

3268. Mr. WRENCH.—He was a powerful horse?—A small horse in size but very strong.

3269. Plenty of bone?—Plenty of bone.

3270. I think from some of your answers you would recommend that other stallions besides thoroughbreds should be registered by the Dublin Society in the county Derry?—I would say so, certainly.

3271. Would you recommend that pure cart horse stallions or Hackney stallions should be registered?—Certainly.

3272. Would you recommend that half-bred stallions should be registered?—I don't think so, I would not breed from a half-bred stallion at all, you don't know what you may get.

3273. And I think that in the queries which you answered to the Commission you gave some recommendation about buying troopers?—Yes, I think if there could be some scheme devised by which farmers could register their mares in some way that it could be more immediately brought under the eye of the Government Board it certainly would be a great thing, because at present I should say no farmer, or very few, sell their horses for troopers direct to the Government, they nearly all pass through the hands of dealers.

3274. And you think it would be possible to arrange some system by which they could be bought direct from the breeders?—I think so. I think that if they were registered, and then when the Board or whoever was buying for the Government came down they could know where to go, or they could give notice that they would be at a certain place on a certain day to those men who thought they had horses suitable for troopers, and get an opportunity of seeing them gathered together.

3275. Are many troopers bought in the North of Ireland?—I could not say very much about that myself, but I believe there are a good many bought in the Moy.

3276. Is Derry a good horse fair?—Oh, no.

3277. When you kept different classes of stallions do you think the farmers were fairly intelligent as to mating the right mare with the right horse?—I think so.

3278. You think the farmers in their districts would be able to give a very good opinion as to their own requirements?—Certainly they would, undoubtedly.

3279. And would you rather—in offering premiums or in carrying out any scheme for the improvement of horses—would you rather that it should be done through the local shows than through the Royal Dublin Society or a body far away?—Yes, I think that a body like the North-east Society in Belfast, or the North-west Society in Derry knows much more about what the neighbourhood really requires, and the class of horses that will take in the district, and are more interested in it.

3280. Then you think that if any Government aid was given in the direction of improving the breed of horses that it ought to be worked through a local society in preference to the central society?—I should think so.

3281. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know at what age those horses for remounts are generally sold to the dealers?—Immediately before they are bought by the Government, the dealer does not keep them long in hand as a rule.

3282. I would like to understand a little better what your opinion is about the deterioration of the mares, because you have told us that prior to the introduction of the pure bred Hackneys and cart horse sires the country generally was served by those nondescript sires which were inferior to the pure bred ones, yet at the same time you say that the produce, as far as the mares remaining in the country are concerned, has not been improved, but rather the reverse?—You know to begin with the use of Hackneys has only been introduced within the last seven or eight years, so that really there is no time to prove what the result of their breeding would be, and all you can see of them is the horses that have been bred and sold, you are not in a position to judge from practical experience what the result in improving the breed may be, but certainly they are more saleable horses. It is my experience that if you put a thoroughbred horse upon a cart mare you will get an animal with perhaps thoroughbred forequarters and

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cart hindquarters or *vice versa*, the most useless sort of animal for any purpose; there is uniformity of type about the Hackney.

3283. Is there anything you would like to say to the Commission, any suggestions as to the way in which the industry could be improved in your part of the country?—I don't know that there is anything I could suggest except some scheme for ensuring the use of sound stallions in the country could be conceived, and a scheme that would give an inducement for the keeping of a better class of mares.

3284. I take it that you think the latter is about of the same importance as the former?—Certainly, a good mare is quite as essential as a good horse.

Colonel Sir William Lenox Conyngham.

Colonel Sir WILLIAM LENOX CONYNGHAM examined.

3285. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Derry?—I do.

3286. In what part of the county?—The south end.

3287. Are you interested in horse-breeding?—I don't breed any horses at present, but formerly I did breed a good many at one time, and I take a great interest in the matter of horse-breeding in the neighbourhood.

3288. When did you cease breeding horses yourself?—About eight years ago.

3289. Do you consider that your district is well suited, generally speaking, for horse-breeding?—Yes, it is a very fair district for breeding. A great many horses are bred in it.

3290. What kind of soil?—It varies considerably, it is alluvial and clay, a loamy soil.

3291. What is the kind of horse that is produced?—Harness horses principally, and occasionally hunters, you get occasional hunters, I have known some very good hunters produced in the country some years ago.

3292. What do the farmers generally aim at producing?—Oh, harness horses, a horse that will sell in the Moy fair is the best way to describe it.

3293. Then you consider the production of harness horses to be the most profitable form of horse breeding?—Yes, the farmers certainly do.

3294. Are there large farms in your district?—Tolerably so, from 50 to 100 acres, and below that again.

3295. And do the farmers generally turn their attention to breeding harness horses?—Oh, harness horses almost entirely.

3296. They look upon horse-breeding as a profitable business?—A great many of them do.

3297. What used you to breed yourself?—I used to breed from thoroughbreds. Unfortunately at one time I tried from a son of Broad Arrow and I got three of the greatest rubbish that any man was ever so unlucky as to have; the mare was a mare got by a horse called Nimrod and her dam was by Stroode, and the grand-dam looked a very well bred mare but I could never find out how she was bred.

3298. You have bred entirely from thoroughbred sires?—I bred from a horse of Lord Charlemont's called Dr. O'Toole, I cannot say much for his produce. I bred from Farnham, and I bred from a horse called Crusader by Crozier.

3299. What class of mares?—I had two mares at one time, one was a great big, said to be a well-bred mare, did not look it, but she bred very badly. The other was a small mare and bred very well.

3300. Are there any thoroughbred stallions in your part of the country?—There are two or three horses; there are two horses standing in Magherafelt said to be thoroughbreds, one horse I am satisfied is, he is a horse called King of the Village by Pirate Chief.

3301. Are there any half-bred horses serving in the district?—Yes, there is one standing there got by Strathardle out of a mare said to be by a horse called Prime Warden that stood near Derry, a very good-looking horse, and his stock are very good-looking.

3302. Do you approve of breeding from half-breds?—I would not do it myself, I don't like them, I would rather have pure bred ones.

3303. Are there any cart horses or Hackney sires in your part of the country?—There is one cart horse supposed to be a Shire horse.

3304. Have you any experience of breeding from Hackneys?—None.

3305. Have you seen any of their produce?—I have seen some of them in my neighbourhood, and since I was written to to come here I have asked a great many of the farmers about my neighbourhood whether they approve of them and they invariably condemn them, and say "Don't send us Hackneys whatever you do."

3306. It is merely second hand evidence, but have you any idea what induced them to form that opinion?—Two of them specially are men who deal in horses and buy them in the neighbourhood, and they won't have them at any price.

3307. You heard the evidence that has just been given to us by Mr. Lane?—Yes, I heard it.

3308. Then you would not, I take it, agree with his opinions as to the improvement likely to arise from the introduction of Hackney blood?—I don't agree with it at all.

3309. Do you think the farmers appreciate a good stallion?—They do thoroughly.

3310. And are you satisfied with the class of stallions in your part of the country?—I am not indeed, there are two horses that have been brought over lately from Yorkshire said to be Cleveland Bays, I have only seen one of them, he is a very good looking horse and I think will improve the breed very much, fine, strong, beautifully coloured horse with very fair action.

3311. What class of stallion would you like to see introduced into the country?—A large, strong thoroughbred

3312. Do you think the farmers would pay for his services?—They would, I think, if it was not too high.

3313. You think that is the kind of horse they would prefer?—I am sure they would.

3314. How is it that if there is a demand for such a horse, no stallion of that kind has been brought into the county?—Some of the Dublin Society's horses have been sent down. There is a horse called "The Waif" there. Four or five years ago they would not have that horse at any price. He stood in Magherafelt for a season; I don't think he got four mares; I don't wonder at it, for he was not at all suited to the country.

3315. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation in your part of the country?—Not now; it was.

3316. And how did it answer?—The result was "The Waif" was sent down there, and it did no good.

3317. Have you any suggestion as to any better means that could be taken than those that are taken by the Dublin Society?—I think if the neighbourhood was represented in the choice of the horses it would be better; for the selection of the horses is made by people who don't know the wants of the neighbourhood at all, and consequently we would be better without these light horses like "The Waif." It would be far better not to send a horse down at all; it only brings the thoroughbred into contempt.

3318. How are those hunters bred that are occasionally bred in your district?—There was a very good horse got by a horse called "Struan" that stood in our district; he was a "Blair Athol" horse. I am speaking of a good many years ago. A horse called "Farnham" got some very nice horses.

3319. Are you pretty well acquainted with Ireland generally as to horse-breeding?—I know the North of Ireland—Derry and the neighbourhood—very well, and I know the neighbourhood of Clonmel pretty well, but that is the only place I can say.

3320. Have you formed any opinion of the probable effect of the introduction of Hackney blood in the country?—From personal experience I cannot say anything about it, but individually I don't like Hackney action; I think they go off their stifles, and in bending up their knees they don't use their shoulders.

3321. How about the mares in your district?—They are very indifferent. I cannot describe it better than to tell you what is said about the mares, when a mare is perfectly useless for anything else, "Oh, she will do capitally to take a foal from."

3322. Are they getting worse or better?—I think they are getting worse.

3323. How do you account for that?—Where the mare is a tolerably good one the people turn her into money.

3324. Was not that always the case?—I don't think it was so many years ago; I think they kept better mares. There was a great run, especially upon brown horses—it is a great many years ago now though—by the Austrian Government, and that denuded us of our best mares.

3325. Do you mean that the farmers don't understand that a good mare is important to breed from?—They certainly understand that they have a better chance of good produce from a good mare, but at the same time, if they can get a long price for a mare, they will turn it into money and not wait for the produce.

3326. And that, in your opinion, is harmful to the industry?—Oh, no question whatever about it.

3327. Can you suggest any way of checking that?—I would suggest that if possible the Government should send down through the country to the farmers conditionally—on what conditions I am hardly prepared to say—cast mares from the artillery. The reason I say from the artillery is that they would be of use to farmers because they could work, not absolutely, if I may say so, cast mares, but mares that have worked for a certain time, and that there is some good left in them—mares that we will say have served seven or eight years in the artillery. If they were given among the farmers, and to be bred from conditionally that the Government should have the refusal of their produce, or something of that sort, I think that would be of use.

3328. You mean that they should be distributed gratis or sold cheaply?—Gratis would be the most attractive way no doubt, but I would sell them cheaply, it would perhaps come to the same thing. I was told the other day that the French are instituting a plan. They are taking their mares after three years' service with the cavalry, giving them to the farmers and putting them to the stallions that are kept in the French *haras*, with the arrangement with the farmers that the produce is to go to the Government: that I think has been always the case when they breed from the horses in the *haras*, that the Government have the claim on the produce; such I was told at the French *haras* near Avranches, that I saw some years ago.

3329. Suppose this could be done don't you think there would be a great deal of dissatisfaction if a man that bred an animal worth £60, should be obliged to sell it to the Government for half the money?—I don't see why they should; when he gets the mare for very little and makes a condition at the same time, I don't see why he should; if he is ensured £35 or £40 for a three-year-old, I think he would be very foolish not to try it.

3330. They would have to be sound I suppose?—The mares?

3331. Yes, I mean to say sound in some respects?—A veterinary surgeon would hardly pass them sound after six or seven years in the Artillery.

3332. Mr. CAREW.—Sound in wind?—Yes, sound in wind of course—not roarers.

3333. CHAIRMAN.—Can you suggest any means by which suitable stallions could be brought to your district?—I think the Royal Dublin Society's plan is as good as any if they could get us the right horses.

3334. I take it from you that any encouragement or aid given by the Government or by a society ought to be conducted by a local committee?—I think so, under the superintendence of the Royal Dublin Society. I would not leave it *carte blanche* to the local society.

3335. Lord ASHTOWN.—The mares in your district, can you give us any information about the size and substance, what they are like?—They vary; some of the farmers have fine big mares, some smaller ones, and the big ones are very carty.

3336. Have the small mares got any bone?—Yes.

3337. Does the land grow bone?—Some of it does, not all of it.

3338. Do you think the majority of the mares are fit to breed a hunter?—Certainly not the majority, the minority by far.

3339. Then the thoroughbred horses that you would want would want to have immense bone?—He would want to have plenty of bone.

3340. And short legs and thick?—Short legs.

3341. Failing that horse, which is a very hard horse to get, what would you support?—Then I would retire upon the Clevelands to try and get a better mare.

3342. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—On the question of stallions you say there is a want of suitable stallions in your district?—Yes, there is.

3343. And for the purpose of arriving at a good stallion for that or any other district would you be in favour of some system of selection by localities of the kind of stallion they would want?—I would, under certain supervision.

3344. Then on the question of price, what would be an average price for the service of a stallion? What do you think the farmers would pay for the service of a stallion?—Well, I kept a stallion for a season myself, and I had great difficulty in getting £2, and then they tried to make a bargain that there should be a foal; that is a very common practice that you don't pay unless there is a foal. In my instance the foals did not appear, but they were sold afterwards for considerable sums of money.

3345. Then you think that £2 is the outside price that a man would be disposed to pay?—Yes.

3346. Would he pay £2?—Yes, the ones that would be likely to breed good horses would pay £2.

3347. Are there any troopers bought in your district?—There are some in Moy fair, principally by foreigners.

3348. What price do they give as an average?—From five and twenty to thirty pounds is the French price.

3249. What would be the average price of the troopers bought by the Home Government?—£30 to £35 and £40. The foreigners will give more money for an inferior horse than we will for a trooper.

3350. Do you find that they buy inferior horses as troopers?—To English troopers, oh, decidedly. There was a horse, I don't know whether he is alive or not yet, called "Katerfelto," that stood in my district, and the French buyers would buy at once for troopers any horse they thought was got by him. They had a great opinion of him. He was a thoroughbred horse got by "Armagnar" by "Faugh-a-ballagh," a plain heavy horse, but a very powerful good goer. He came to the country by accident. He had met with an injury, and I am sorry to say he has left it.

3351. Mr. CAREW.—I think you said, Sir William, that you had some of "Broad Arrow's" stock?—I bred from a son of his.

3352. He is a Hackney?—He was a Hackney.

3353. And the produce was very disappointing?—Very disappointing. I knew two got by "Broad

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Arrow." One of them is a very old mare. She was a perfect beauty, and most beautiful goer, but I am told that after five or six miles you must press her.

3354. That is about the length of her tether, she would require pressing after that time?—I cannot say that from personal knowledge; I only heard it; and the other mare was a brown mare, a very handsome mare that didn't like a long day either.

3355. Do not the dealers in your district entirely disapprove of the Hackney?—Yes.

3356. And these dealers are largely interested in the trade?—They are; they sell a good many in Moy fair.

3357. Do you know how much they spend in the country in the purchase of horses, these dealers?—No, I cannot say; they generally have from 6 to 7, 8 and 10 horses at a time; one of them especially.

3358. Then you are in favour of a large strong boned thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

3359. For getting harness horses?—Yes; there was a horse called "Nimrod."

3360. Mr. La Touche.—A brother to Bacchus?

Witness.—Oh, dear, no, a much older horse; he was by "Quicksilver" out of "Charm." Mr. H. H. O'H. O'Hara, of Craigvilla, brought him over to this country; he belonged to Sir Watkin Wynne, who had ridden him seven years with hounds, riding 17 stone; that horse stood in the country for a good while, and left his mark; but it is a long time ago, it must be 40 years.

3361. You don't know what his breeding was?—No.

3362. Mr. Carew.—How many years ago was that would you say?—Forty years.

3363. Was he a thoroughbred?—Yes; got by "Quicksilver," afterwards "The Execrable." "Quicksilver" was by "Memnon," and "Nimrod's" dam was a mare called "Charm." I think she was not in the stud book, but she was said to be a thoroughbred. He was a tremendously powerful horse. I never saw so strong a thoroughbred.

3364. You spoke of a half-bred by "Strathardle." who left good stock?—Yes.

3365. Would you not be in favour of a half-bred for those mares?—I think this horse I spoke of has hardly a stain in him.

3366. He is not in the stud book?—No. his dam is not.

3367. Mr. La Touche.—Do they sell many foals, the farmers in your country, or keep them for three or four years?—They sell a good many of them as foals.

3368. Sell them to one another?—They are sold in the fair at Moneymore, a great many of them.

3369. Does one man buy a lot of them?—No, generally one.

3370. They buy one each?—One at a time is sold generally; sometimes the English dealers buy them there.

3371. Buy the foals?—Yes; that is not often; but sometimes they do come over.

3372. Farmers do use Hackney stallions a good deal in your district?—One Hackney stallion visits from the town of Magherafelt during the season; He comes from Limavady, Mr. Lane's people; they like him pretty well. One of the men who objected to the Hackneys was a man who had kept a Hackney stallion himself, a Yorksbire Hackney.

3373. Did these people give any reason?—They don't like their action; they say it is a fighting action; and that they go off their stifles, and that it is a great effort with them to go.

3374. Does the produce fetch a good price?—No, any I have seen do not fetch as good prices as from other horses. But I ought to say perhaps that this stallion which I have seen as a Hackney I don't think anyone would care much about him—no matter how much in love he might be with Hackneys; he was a hobby-horse headed style of brute with bad forelegs, I don't wonder they do not breed from him.

3375. Mr. Wrench.—The Hackney you are specially alluding to was a son of "Broad Arrow"?—I don't specially allude to him except breeding from him myself and having a very bad horse from him.

3376. But you said he was a son of "Broad Arrow"?—Yes.

3377. Do you know what mare he was out of?—Said to be a Yorkshire cart mare.

3378. He was not a pure Hackney?—No, he was not.

3379. And this other Hackney which you think no one would breed from, how was he bred?—I don't know, he was a blood horse, he came from Limavady.

3380. You don't know whether he is a pure Hackney?—He was said to be.

3381. He is the horse that has been sold?—I don't know.

3382. You say that the trade in your district is practically entirely harness trade?—Yes, a harness trade.

3383. Then the demand for other horses is small?—It is, except locally for farm horses.

3384. That is general utility horses?—Yes.

3385. But the harness horse is the best class they try to produce?—Yes, that is what they want.

3386. I suppose you think action is a very great consideration in a harness horse?—No doubt.

3387. How have you formed your opinion as to Hackney action being bad, as you generally condemn Hackney action?—I don't like it myself, I don't like that style of action.

3388. Where have you seen it?—At a show in Cambridge where there were said to be very good Hackneys; I don't like their style of action.

3389. Where else?—And this horse "Excelsior" in Limavady.

3390. Then your experience is confined?—My experience is limited of course, but I don't like the action.

3391. It is practically confined to what you saw at Cambridge and this Limavady horse?—Yes, horses.

3392. I think you also bred from a horse called "Dr. O'Toole"?—Yes.

3393. Did you find his stock good?—Thoroughly bad.

3394. He was a thoroughbred?—Yes.

3395. Your aim was to breed hunters?—Yes.

3396. Did you find it pay?—out of that one mare I cannot complain of her not paying me.

3397. She was a specially good mare?—Yes, except those three of "Broad Arrow's" ones did not pay me well, but a horse by "Crusader," and one by "Katerfelto," and one by "Normanby" paid me well.

3398. You think the mares are bad in your district?—No doubt about it.

3399. And you think that an effort should be made to improve them so that they would be fit to cross with a thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

3400. How would you propose to improve the cross there?—With Clevelands.

3401. You alluded to two Clevelands in your district?—Yes.

3402. Have you seen them?—Only one of them.

3403. You only speak of the other by hearsay?—By hearsay; this horse I have seen last season was his second, and the other one was his first.

3404. Have you seen any Clevelands in other places?—At shows, and one or two in the county of Derry a long time ago.

3405. What shows?—Belfast occasionally.

3406. Pure Clevelands?—Said to be.

3407. Then your experience of Clevelands is confined to what you have seen in shows in Ireland?—Yes.

3408. And to the one horse in your own district?—Yes.

3409. I think also in your report you recommend that the horses that should be used should be strong thoroughbreds or Clevelands?—Yes.

3410. So that your recommendation regarding Clevelands is only based on what you have seen yourself?—Yes; I have seen Clevelands elsewhere; a great many years ago there were a great many Cleveland carriage horses in my neighbourhood.

3411 You don't know if they were pedigreed?—No.

3412. Would you be inclined to register what you call a half-bred sire?—A half-bred sire with barely a stain in him, but I would not register an extreme cross such as a thoroughbred with a Hackney or Clydesdale.

3413. But what class of half-breds would you register?—One that you could not absolutely trace his pedigree in the stud book, but that spoke for himself as a thoroughbred.

3414. Then you would register on appearance?—Not entirely on appearance, because you can trace them.

3415. How many crosses would you think necessary in a half-bred horse to be registered?—I would do it where the dam and sire did not appear in the stud book, but were known to be thoroughbred.

3416. You would not require any definite particulars of thoroughbred cross?—I would not.

3417. I think you said you spoke to two dealers who disliked Hackneys very much?—Yes.

3418. I was just going to ask you to put the names of those two dealers in privately to the Chairman?—Yes.

3419. Were they large dealers?—Yes; they deal in a good many good horses in Moy fair.

3420. You don't know what experience they have had of Hackneys except that one kept what was called a Hackney stallion at one time?—No, that man was not a dealer, he was a veterinary surgeon.

3421. You don't know if these men have had any experience of Hackneys?—No, except they bought some of the produce, and didn't like them.

3422. CHAIRMAN.—I take it, Sir William, that what you would prefer to improve the breed of horses is a strong, sound, thoroughbred stallion?—Yes.

3423. And that you think it would improve the mares to cross them with a Cleveland Bay?—Yes.

3424. Would you prefer a Cleveland Bay to a Hackney?—I would on account of the next cross with a thoroughbred; I think a Cleveland is more like a thoroughbred than a Hackney; if you go in for breeding harness horses, I think you will be much more likely to have hunters from Clevelands than ——

3425. How do you think the mares could be best improved—by a cross with what, as regards harness horses?—For harness horses I think the Clevelands are more likely to produce a big, upstanding carriage horse than the Hackney.

3426. And your opinion of the Clevelands and your opinion of the Hackney is arrived at from what you have seen, what you have heard, and what you have read?—Yes.

3427. Lord ASHTOWN.—You prefer a Cleveland for harness purposes, for cross purposes, to the Hackney?—Yes; I think he is more of a thoroughbred looking horse.

3428. Do you prefer his action?—I think his action would take you over the ground faster than the Hackney.

3429. You mentioned a horse called "Excelsior." Do you like his action?—I do not.

3430. Do you think, supposing you could breed a horse with his action, you could not get a high price for him?—I should say you could sell them well enough, but I would not like to buy him.

3431. Would you not get a better price for a horse like "Excelsior," a harness horse, than for a Cleveland?—I do not. I don't think he would be so big or so active.

3432 Still you would get a good price for a harness horse like "Excelsior"?—I dare say a horse like "Excelsior" would pay right well.

3433. So that, although you don't presumably like them, still you say it would pay the farmer to breed them?—It would pay them to breed a horse like "Excelsior"; it would pay very well indeed.

3434. And with that action?—I won't say that. So far as I am concerned I would not be bothered with him.

3435. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything else you would like to say to the Commission, Sir William?—I don't think there is anything I have got to say except to try to keep the mares in the country; it is a very important matter, more important perhaps than the horses; you have a fair chance of getting the thoroughbred horse because there are so many of them bred, but the difficulty is getting the farmers to keep the best mares.

3736. Lord ASHTOWN.—In fact before you can use the thoroughbred you would want to improve the mares to get them fit for it?—Yes; but even with the mares that we have I think you have a better chance with a thoroughbred than with anything else.

3437. In the hunter line?—Yes.

3438. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You agree with the London dealers that the best upstanding carriage horses are got by thoroughbreds?—I do.

3439. And you think that the big upstanding carriage horse is more likely to be produced by the thoroughbred than any other?—I think so. I was told coming up in the train the other day by a man who knows a good deal about the matter, that East, the dealer, says that if Hackneys are introduced in Ireland it will spoil the carriage horse, of which he buys £10,000 worth each year.

3440. CHAIRMAN.—This is rather remote. We can get it more directly?—I know that East's horses are very good looking ones wherever he gets them.

The REV. A. N. HAIRE-FORSTER, J.P., examined.

3441. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Monaghan?—I do.

3442. In what part of the county?—The northern end of it; near to the town of Clones, bordering on Fermanagh.

3443. Can you give the Commission an idea of the character of your district, soil, and so on?—It is generally wet heavy clay.

3444. What kind of sized holdings?—Very small, from twenty acres down, some as low as five or six acres.

3445. Are many horses bred by the farmers of the district?—Not many; they say always that their farms are too small; they have no outrun for them.

3446. What kind of horses do they breed and from what class of mares?—A very low, small mongrel sort of mare that it would be difficult to describe, and from whatever stallion they can get easiest, and at the lowest rate.

3447. Do they breed for their own purposes or for sale?—For sale if they can get the price.

3448. What kind of stallions are there in the district?—For the most part stallions brought about to fairs; some call them half-bred; there are some thoroughbreds in the county, but the small farmers would not pay the service fee as a rule; there are several registered by the Royal Dublin Society but very few avail themselves of them.

3449. The fee is too high?—Too high, and also they do not like the stamp of the animals; those that are good the fee is too high, and the others they don't like.

3450. Are there any large farmers in your district who breed?—So far as I can say the larger farmer does not go in for it.

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Mr. A. N. Haire-Forster.

3451. Are you interested in the subject of horse-breeding yourself?—Yes, I have been acting for the Royal Dublin Society since it started in the county.

3452. Were you at the Clones show last autumn?—I was.

3453. What kind of show was it—I mean the stock exhibited?—A very fair young stock; they only have them up to three-years-old—a mare and foal, yearling, two-year-old and three-year-old, if in the hands of breeder.

3454. How were they bred generally?—By thoroughbreds, many by the registered stallions of the Royal Dublin Society.

3455. Have you been engaged in breeding of horses yourself at all?—Every year a little, for some twenty years with whatever mares I used on my farm, had one, two or three foals each year.

3456. What horse do you generally put them to?—The thoroughbred I can most easily approach.

2457. Is there any suitable thoroughbred near enough to you?—I have had two or three of the Royal Dublin Society's not far from me—kept by Colonel Thompson at Rockcorry; latterly these ones, and before that, "Folorn Hope," in the county Fermanagh, kept by the Archdales, I found the most successful.

3458. What do you think influences the small farmer most—the fee or proximity?—Proximity and low rate of service, but what I find them lay more stress on than anything is the guarantee of the foal—no pay no foal; they don't like paying any fee absolutely.

3459. I suppose they are able to judge what class of horses would be best for them—supposing they can afford the fee?—They would like the horse they could sell best.

3460. You said I think you never had a quite sound horse?—I said that with a rude cross and a farm horse I never had a sound one.

3461. Lord ASHTOWN.—Never a sound one?—Between a cart mare and a thoroughbred—when the cross was a very distinct one, in that case I never had a sound one produced from the same mare that had always bred sound ones with a horse of her own class.

3462. CHAIRMAN. — Are there any Clydesdale stallions in your county?—I don't know that in this county, Monaghan, there is a Clydesdale; in the adjoining counties there are.

3463. Or Clevelands or anything of that kind?—Latterly there has been a Cleveland, within the last three years I should think.

3464. Have you formed any opinion as to the advantages and disadvantages of crossing mares with a Cleveland for producing hunters?—Not the least.

3465. No experience?—From anything I do know I should not like to try the experiment.

3466. How about the Hackney?—Not with a view of producing a hunter, I would not run the risk; all horse-breeding on the best lines is very risky; taking every precaution that one can you will be often disappointed.

3467. Mr. CAREW.—It is a speculation?—Yes.

3468. CHAIRMAN.—And you don't think that the risks would be lessened by the introduction of Cleveland blood?—Not for hunters.

3469. And how about the introduction of Hackney blood?—I know very little about it; anything I do know so far as my experience goes in breeding is against them. Having bred from the same mare by a thoroughbred horse and also by them, but only four or five foals—I had a little mare, practically a thoroughbred, that got weight-carrying hunters from "Forlorn Hope," and absolutely worthless foals from a Hackney—a little mare, her produce went for £250 in England as a weight-carrying hunter. I tried to sell a four-year old—a horse by a Hackney—and I could not get £20 for him.

3470. What Hackney sire?—"Prince George;" he was standing in Fermanagh.

3471. Mr. WRENCH.— He was a small horse?—He was, and there my knowledge of Hackneys ends, except so far as breeding from that one.

3472. CHAIRMAN.—Your personal knowledge?—That is all.

3473. Speaking generally, what do you consider the best class of stallion?— Unhesitatingly the thoroughbred of the right type, get a thoroughbred with bone.

3474. You have described the mares as being very mongrel?—Yes; and as a rule if the farmer has a filly foal he cannot sell he keeps her to breed from. He only keeps her to breed because he cannot get the price.

3475. Can you suggest what, in your opinion, would be the best way to improve the mares?—I am in hopes that the plan which is in work now with the Royal Dublin Society will do it—giving prizes to men to keep the mares. I was always in favour of that, but I have been disappointed that they won't pay the service money. The class of men who have these poor mares won't go in for the service of the thoroughbred, because they have to pay too much. If they could combine somewhat of the two systems it might have a good effect—rewarding the farmer for keeping a good mare, and helping him to get the service of the horse. In my locality that is what I have observed.

3476. To improve the breed of the mares (to make them more suitable, and thereby produce more valuable carriage horses and hunters), do you think it would be advisable to introduce any other cross?—Not so far as I know, if you could get a thoroughbred with good enough bone.

3477. And the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has not, in your opinion, been very successful in your county?—Not in my immediate neighbourhood; in the end of the county nearer Dublin—Carrickmacross and Castleblayney—there is a larger class of farmers with better mares, and they are making good use of it. They are crossing now with mares got by the sires that they were helped with the service of in years gone by, and getting prizes for those mares.

3478. We have had it in evidence several times that the demand for the general utility horse has declined, and the price declined, although the prices for good hunters and good carriage horses keeps up—do you think the small farmers, under any circumstances, would be able to breed valuable horses?—Sometimes with these unaccountable mares an odd cross hits well, and they get a horse which pays them fairly.

3479. If it be true that the demand for the general utility horse is declining, in assisting small farmers to breed, would it be assisting him in endeavouring to encourage him in what was bound to be an unprofitable business?—That is a very difficult question; if the price continues to fall of the middling or worse than middling horse, it is a question if it would pay him.

3480. Do you know if the foreign competition has any effect on the middling or worse than middling horse?—I know the dealers say they can get a foreign horse much cheaper. There are several causes to pull down the price.

3481. What are they?—The foreign competition, and a number of people have given up horses that made use of them formerly, together with the fact that a class of people who kept horses as a luxury are being deprived of the means of keeping them.

3482. A good many people who kept horses cannot now afford to?—Yes, that is one cause; they are taking to bicycles and other means of conveyance, and the foreign competition; I think these three things have pulled down the prices of horses.

3483. Are many horses sold for remounts in your part of the country?—Yes, in the fair of Clones; I think a couple of hundred in every fair.

3484. Did you hear a suggestion made by a former witness that it would be a good thing if Artillery mares could be distributed among the farmers?—Yes, I heard it, but I am not competent to say. But these

horses come from everywhere, the horses sold in Clones fair come from every part. Dealers bring them in droves from Mullingar and other parts of Ireland; it is a place that is easy of access from all parts and dealers come from everywhere to it.

3485. Sir THOMAS FSMONDE.—Is there any breeding of ponies in your district?—Well, very little; there is no such thing as a pony stallion in the county that I know of.

3486. Is the county adapted to the breeding of ponies?—I should think it would, but the question is if they would be able to command a price. I don't think they would get for them anything that would remunerate them.

3487. You have had no experience of the breeding of ponies?—For myself I have bred a good many.

3488. How did you find they paid?—I used a great many myself and in that way found it paid. I sold some and got £20 or £30 for them.

3489. What were those by?—Most I bred from was a Forester, a pony of Lord Enniskillen's.

3490. What was he, a pony?—Yes, a Forester, they call that a pony.

3491. Have you any experience of the Barb or Arab?—No.

3492. They have never been tried up with you?—They have; when that Forester pony died Lord Enniskillen got an Arab, but I don't know much about the result.

3493. Have you ever seen any of his produce?—I have seen some but I don't know that I can form any opinion; they were very young when I saw them.

3494. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said your only experience of Hackneys was with "Royal George"?—That is all.

3495. You would not call him a good specimen of a horse of any kind?—He was more of a pony: he was not 15 hands.

3496. And the mare you bred this good horse from before you crossed with Royal George, and when she produced a favourable result you crossed her with a much better thoroughbred?—It was always from a thoroughbred that I bred before.

3497. I mean the thoroughbred you bred from before was a good deal bigger than "Royal George"?—Yes, he was 16 hands at least.

3498. And with a big thoroughbred you produced a good result?—Yes.

3499. And with a small Hackney she produced a bad result?—That is all I can say.

3500. In your recommendation as to what class of horse would be best—most required—what shape, you say, "I like a small compact thoroughbred with good bone and rather under 16 hands, anything over 15.2"?—With fair action.

3501. Would it not be better for these farmers to breed harness horses than to attempt to breed hunters?—I think it would.

3502. A horse with good action does sell well generally?—It is the one thing that does sell a horse in a fair.

3503. Clones is one of the chief monthly fairs in the North of Ireland?—Next to Moy fair, it is the best monthly fair in Ireland. I don't know any town where there are twelve fairs such as Clones and Moy. There are greater fairs, of course you understand me, but as a monthly fair I think the only one to exceed it is Moy.

3504. Is not there close to Clones, in the county Fermanagh, a considerable district where horses are bred?—Fermanagh is a great horse breeding county, part of it.

3505. Especially that round the town of Clones?—Yes.

3506. There are a good many horses bred in your district, although not actually in the county?—There are. Fermanagh is decidedly a horse-breeding county.

3507. And your experience of breeding is that a too violent cross does not result well?—No, my experience, without exception, has been unsoundness.

3508. Therefore in trying to improve the stock of small farmers' mares, the stallions should not be too far removed from the mares?—I think not.

3509. Do you think a thoroughbred horse could be found suitable to all the mares in your district?—Well, I suppose not; some, I think, had better have their throats cut than breed from, for the good of the community.

3510. If a man must keep a mare and looking upon breeding as a source of profit, are there several mares that ought not to be crossed with a thoroughbred horse, mares that are too weedy and light?—I don't think they ought to be crossed with anything.

3511. You would stop them altogether from breeding?—I would.

3512. So far as improving the breeding of horses is concerned, do you think that is practicable?—No, of course it is not.

3513. You said a better class of horse was coming from the Castleblayney and Carrickmacross district—from that end of the county?—Yes.

3514. You don't attribute that to the size of the farms?—Large farmers are able to get a better class of horse by having large farms.

3515. Where do you allude to?—Just about Carrickmacross; it is only between Castleblayney and up to Carrickmacross, that district where there are large farms.

3516. But is it not a fact that the farms about Clones are much larger, as a rule, than about Castleblayney and Carrickmacross, except just about that district?—That is the only district from which the men come in to make use of the Royal Dublin Society's grant; that is the only means I have of knowing.

3517. Do you think any grant made through the Royal Dublin Society or other society could be expended through the local society such as Clones?—But they do it by a local committee. I don't see what else is wanted; the Royal Dublin Society work by local committee.

3518. Don't the Royal Dublin Society name their own committee?—Well, I can only tell you in my own case; they asked me would I act as chairman, and to appoint my own committee.

3519. You think that is a better way than asking the people to appoint a committee?—That I don't know.

3520. You said you thought the people were competent to form an opinion as to what they wanted for themselves?—Yes.

3521. At present they have no voice in the selection of the committee?—No.

3522. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything you would like to say to the Commission?—I have heard a question asked of the witnesses about registering half-bred horses; if there be a horse not a thoroughbred, who had proved himself a valuable sire, I think such a horse as that might be registered, but not unless he had proved himself, because if he be not a clean bred horse *a priori* you cannot tell what sort of stock he will produce; I think there is an ideal horse which might not be a thoroughbred that might be registered once he has proved himself.

3523. That is approved of by some competent authority?—By the foals he has got; by his produce only.

3524. But somebody must judge of that?—The only proof to rely on is his produce; if he be not a clean bred one, and if it was practical to combine the two systems of the Royal Dublin Society I know of no better thing for the country—namely, encouraging the farmers to keep a good mare, and helping them also in the service of a good horse. First they tried merely paying for the service of the horse; they abandoned that and gave all the money in prizes to the mares. If it were practicable to combine something of both, so far as I can observe, I think it would be the best method.

Nov. 29, 1895.

Mr. A. N. Haire-Forster.

3525. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Do you think mares in your county are fit to breed from at all with a suitable thoroughbred horse?—I do.

3526. Do you think that the ones that are not fit to be put to a thoroughbred are not fit to be put to a horse of any sort or kind?—I do. I think it is not worth the risk.

3527. Mr. WRENCH.—Then you think you would go on crossing their produce with a thoroughbred horse?—I should think so.

3528. And you don't think the result in time would be a lot of weeds?—Well, but we have assumed that we have got rid of the worst of them.

3529. But you say that all of the mares that ought to be bred from are fit to be crossed with a thoroughbred horse?—But then as to crossing again I really know nothing.

3530. You don't pretend to say you would go on crossing with thoroughbred horses?—I myself have continued with a thoroughbred, that is one got by a thoroughbred; then I have sent that again to a thoroughbred. I found that always fairly satisfactory.

3531. You found you got good prices for those animals?—Yes.

3532. Then, of course, your mares are perhaps exceptionally good, better than the farmers have in the district?—Oh, they are, of course they are better.

3533. You think you could go on breeding from thoroughbred horses without bringing in any stronger strain?—I would prefer it. I would rather do it myself.

3534. And you think the produce would be as suitable to work on the farms, and do the work of the people when they are required?—Oh, if you want farming I would go to the Clydesdale.

3535. No, but it is not necessary on the small farms that you speak of always to have a horse of the same strength as the Clydesdale, is it?—No, they want the horse to go to the market and for general purposes.

3536. Or for light carts?—Yes.

3537. But you think a horse with two or three crosses of thoroughbred blood in him would be a suitable horse for that purpose?—I have seen them do very well with them.

3538. Mr. CAREW.—If you desired a change you would go to the half-bred horse that you would register?—I would have no objection to one that had proved himself.

3539. The thoroughbred and the registered half-bred you would go to?—I am in favour of registering nothing but a pure bred and an exceptional case of a horse that had proved himself a valuable sire.

3540. And if you wanted a change from the thoroughbred with these good mares you have you would prefer to send them to a half-bred that was registered, when he had shown by his produce he was a good one?—Yes, I should place him then in the category of a thoroughbred for use.

3541 Mr. WRENCH.—Would you register any horse of a pure breed except a thoroughbred?—I know nothing about any other.

3542. In answer to the query "What breed of stallion do you consider most suitable to mate with the mares in your district," Mr. Forster says, "Any small compact stallion with bone and action out of some pure breed, thoroughbred, Clydesdale, Cleveland, or Hackney"?—Any pure breed I would register.

3543 You register any of those three horses that you have named there if they were suitable?—I would.

3544. CHAIRMAN.—That is quite different to what I understood you to say before. I should like to know what your opinion is, because I asked you some time ago a question whether to make the mares in your district more suitable to be crossed with a thoroughbred sire you thought the introduction of Clydesdale or Hackney blood would be of service. I understood you to say you did not think so. Now I gather from this you approve of the Clydesdale and Hackney, provided they were pure bred?—Clydesdale I always approved of for farm purposes, and often bred from them.

3545. The distinction is you do not approve of them for hunters and carriage horses, but you do approve of them for farms?—Or even for farmers to get a price. The small farmer when he breeds wants to have something to sell in the first instance, and they do not sell so well.

3546. Mr. WRENCH.—What do not sell so well?—The produce of the Clydesdale.

3547. CHAIRMAN.—May I put it this way that as regards breeding hunters or high class carriage horses you would consider that the introduction of the Clydesdale or Hackney blood, even from a pure bred Clydesdale or Hackney stallion, would be of no advantage?—That is my opinion.

3548. But as regards horses for farming purposes and a certain class of carriage horse that you think the introduction of that blood, provided the sire was pure bred, would be an advantage?—It might be, but I have no experience of the Hackney beyond what I have stated, and of the Clydesdale, except for farm work, for which I think it is very valuable.

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3549. CHAIRMAN. — You live in the county Monaghan, I think?—Yes, sir.

3550. What part of the county?—Castleblayney.

3551. Are you occupied in farming?—A little bit, I have seven farms of land round Castleblayney.

3552. You breed horses?—A little.

3553. Do you deal in horses?—Yes.

3554. And you know the whole county pretty well as regards horse-breeding?—Oh, yes, I know several countries—I know Ireland, England, and America.

3555. Do you keep a stallion yourself?—Yes, sir.

3556. What kind of a stallion?—Different kinds I kept.

3557. Oh, you have got several?—Yes, had several.

3558. How many have you got now or how many have you had altogether?—I could not tell you I had so many.

3559. Of all kinds of breeds?—All kinds of breeds—no, I never had any Clydesdales or Arabs.

3560. How many have you got now?—I have some racing now that I am going to keep as sires, but I have got three sires at present at home in my place.

3561. What are they?—Thoroughbred.

3562. All thoroughbred? Yes. I had a Hackney about twenty years ago and he died with me, I had him three years.

3563. Have you ever had a Hackney since?—Yes. I went to the London show and I bought a Hackney there, a three-year-old, I gave £450 for him, I took him home to keep him for my own purposes; he was a nice Hackney 15.3 hands, made like a hunter, good neck and shoulder, could carry you with hounds I think if he could gallop enough.

3564. What became of him?—I sold him the day I landed home from London to an American with £50 of profit, I thought a ready ninepence was better than waiting for a shilling, and so I took it, and I was very sorry for it after, I bought him purposely to keep as a sire.

3565. What is the size of the farms in your neighbourhood, small or large?—There are some of them small and some not very large, I think I have the largest farm I know of myself for a poor man.

3566. What class of horses are bred—carriage horses, hunters, or what?—I think there are more tramway horses bred about there except a few I breed myself.

3567. What kind of horse does the farmer go in for producing?—Really, I could not answer the question, for I think all the farmer wants is a penny for a halfpenny, or something cheap, and to get a glass of whiskey when they are bringing the mare into the place, they don't study their interests at all only to have something cheap. As a rule the farmers round where I live would just give as much for a codfish as they would for a salmon.

3568. What kind of mares do they breed from?—I could not tell you the pedigrees of them.

3568A. No, I don't suppose you could, but you might give me an idea of what they are like?—Some of them are pretty fair; and if they got a good cross they would breed a very useful horse; if they were crossed with a good thoroughbred stallion, in the first place, with short legs, and plenty of bone, and went straight in his action, and stepped a little high, not a very big or leggy thoroughbred stallion, only a horse about 15.3, with plenty of bone, good shoulders, and tail on the top of his back. Then there is the Hackney, if you want to breed from a Hackney with this class of mare, you must have a Hackney with good neck and shoulders, good knees, legs and feet, a short back, and the tail on the top of his back, with action; if you put that upon a half-bred mare in my country, I will guarantee you will breed a good selling horse. I had a farm mare of mine. I sent her to a Hackney at Newtownlimavady, and I got a three-year-old, and it is as pretty a thing as ever I saw, out of one of my farm mares.

3569. Have you sold any produce of your mares by the Hackney sire?—Oh, yes, I did, when I had it, but it is 10 or 20 years ago, I could not tell you so much about it. This Hackney stallion's name was Great Gun; I kept him three years, and I bought some of his produce.

3570. Have you any knowledge or any experience of the produce of the Congested Districts Board's stallions?—Well, it is a thing I don't take much interest in, I cannot tell you about that; I don't go round about the farmers to see what they have got.

3571. You buy and sell horses, don't you?—Yes; occasionally, when I am at home; but my son has pensioned me off; he does not think I am fit to buy any horses now; I am only a servant.

3572. What is your opinion of the half-bred stallions?—I cannot answer the question; I never had one.

3573. You have no opinion as to whether a half-bred sire is better or worse than a thoroughbred one?—I cannot answer the question, because I never had one; and when I had not I could not answer by hearsay.

3574. You have no opinion about anything unless you have had personal experience of it?—Yes, and to see the look of it; to see the sire or mare that is half-bred. I often bred some very good hunters out of half-bred mares that were got by thoroughbred sires; and I got three or four very good ones that were got by a Hackney stallion, Great Gun, 17 or 18 years ago, and I sold them at large prices, but the trade was better in England at that time than it is now; because, in my opinion, a colt or anything you take to market to sell, if it has not action he is just like a bell without a clapper; it is very little use.

3575. Have you got a horse named Marshall?—I had him; he is dead, which I am very sorry for.

3576. Was he in the Stud Book?—He was got by General Peel; I bought him of Marshall Brook, of Tarporley, Cheshire.

3577. What breed of stallion do you consider the best calculated to produce high-class harness horses and hunters?—Thoroughbreds will produce the best hunters.

3578. What about a harness horse?—I sold 26 harness horses; I sent them to England last Monday; I sold them last Thursday week; I sold the 26 to one man at £90 a piece, and there was five out of the lot got by Hackneys. I gave the gentleman the pedigree.

3579. What am I to deduce from that as your opinion?—I am only telling you what it is; my son told the gentleman what they were got by, he asked the breeding of everyone.

3580. I am asking you which you prefer, if you have not got any opinion you have only to say so. I was asking you whether you would prefer a Hackney or a thoroughbred or any other sire to produce high-class carriage horses?—If you have a right strong mare and her well bred, she will get the best carriage horse with a thoroughbred horse, but if you have a good mare with good shoulders and the sire 15.3 of a Hackney, he will get as good a one as the thoroughbred, and, in some instances, a better one, for they will have better action, and they are not so big, and these jobmasters in London that used to buy big horses they all prefer to get them now from 15.2 to under 16.

3581. Action has a large effect upon the price, has it not?—It is everything in the harness horse, but not in the hunter.

3582. I am talking of the harness horse; do you think action is more likely to be obtained from a Hackney sire than any other?—I am sure the Hackney sire will produce better action if he gets a suitable mare, and the Hackney sire to be a good-sized one with good shoulders and head and neck, and plenty of bone, and above everything to go well off his hind legs.

3583. What class of a horse do you think it pays best to breed in your locality?—I just sold a yearling for £400 last week, a thoroughbred; and if you want to ask me, I prefer nothing but a thoroughbred.

3584. Yes, that may suit yourself?—That suits myself, but when you asked me what was my opinion I have given it to you.

3585. But you don't mean the Commission to understand that you think the best thing the farmers in your district could do would be to breed thoroughbred stock?—No, the farmers cannot afford it; they have not the land to keep them on, nor the stabling to rear them in.

3586. I think you said you had some experience in America?—Yes, a little; I was there seven times, took horses out there and took others back.

3587. Have you sold many horses to America?—Yes.

3588. And imported horses from America?—Yes. I was given £2,000 for a Hackney four-year-old, called "The Star of Napal," that I took out to America.

3589. Is there much demand for Hackneys in America?—Yes, sir.

3590. What do they use them for?—For breeding purposes, if they are stallions.

3591. And you have imported horses from America?—Oh, yes.

3592. What kind of horses?—I bought them from £30 to £120 a piece.

3593. And what became of them?—Some of them died on the sea coming home, and some of them died at home, and some of them I sold at a very good price. I sold one the other day at Rugby that I gave £65 for in America, and it made £15; and I sold one there I gave £50 for, and it made £120; so I am just telling you a little bit about my trade.

3594. Where were they landed, these horses from America?—Liverpool; I bought them in Chicago. I want to tell you where I bought them; and then I took them from Chicago to New York and shipped them by the White Star Company.

3595. You selected them yourself, I suppose?—Oh,

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yes, sir; I am capable, if I see one worth the money, of buying it.

3596. It has been mentioned in evidence by a good many witnesses that they think the importation of American horses has knocked down prices a good deal; is that your opinion?—That is my opinion exactly, and I often saw 700 horses of a day in Chicago for sale, and I would not pick five out of the 700 to pay the expenses of taking them home.

3597. Do you think the quality of the mares in your district is improving or getting worse year after year?—Well, I think there is a difference in them; they were a great deal better twenty-five or thirty years ago than they are now, I am sure.

3598. How do you account for their falling off?—If a farmer in my country has a mare three years old that would make from £20 to £30 he will sell her, if he has a mare that he cannot sell he will put her to the cheap sire, the Government one or any one he can get and breed from her because he cannot sell her.

3599. Did they not always do that?—No, years ago they did not because the farmers were pretty well off; they would keep a good brood mare and breed from her, but now they cannot afford it, the small farmers, I am not talking of large farmers.

3600. Do you think anything can be done to stop that?—Oh, yes, I think a great deal can be done to stop that and encourage the farmers in this country.

3601. In what way do you think they could be helped?—In the first place to tax every horse that comes out of America to be landed in Europe, the same as every horse that comes from us and everything else that comes from here to America we have to pay duty on; I had to pay as much as forty per cent. for taking horses there. That is the first way you would encourage the farmers to make money. I heard other gentlemen suggested to get them branded, that would not do a ha'porth for the sort of horses the farmers breed in this country, because those Americans are all sold for hard work, trammers and cabbers. Seven years ago I paid £12 a horse for them coming from New York to Liverpool, and this year I paid £3 10*s.* in a better ship, and I will tell you what we had, we had 281 horses, 800 fat bullocks alive, 2,100 sheep and 19,000 tons of dead meat in the "Georgic."

3602. Then you would recommend that these horses should have a duty put upon them?—Yes, a duty on them and on cattle. Seven years ago the charge was £4 12*s.* 6*d.* for a live bullock, and this time it was 35*s.* If we take carriage horses or hunters to America we have to pay forty per cent on them when they go there, and there is no way at all to encourage farmers in England or Ireland only to make the American horses pay duty as we have to pay there on everything except animals for breeding purposes, then they let it go free if we can show three generations in a stud book.

3603. Supposing that cannot be done can you suggest any other way in which the breed of horses can be improved?—There is no way the breed of horses can be much better improved than to give every farmer the price of a useful mare and buy her and give her to him and make him pay so much a year until she is paid for; selling her to him without the money for five years and to pay so much a year until she was paid for.

3604. On the instalment system?—Yes, the Jew system.

3605. Where would the mares come from?—You can buy plenty of them in England after the hunting season, broken down mares, in England or Ireland too, mares with good short legs, 15.3, good bone, supposing they are broken down in their tendons or get lame by hard work this is the right class of mare for a farmer to breed from.

2606. Do you suggest any way by which the farmers can be induced to keep their best mares in the country?—There are plenty of mares, I say, artillery mares, and mares I know in plenty of regiments, there are plenty of them would do a farmer well for hard work on the farm and to breed a very good foal.

3607. But supposing they did breed a good foal you say the farmers are much more inclined now than they used to be to sell their best mares and keep the worst ones, how would you prevent that?—The farmers are pressed so much, they are getting such a bad price for their wheat, corn, and flax, and every such thing as that, they have their bills to meet, and they must sell what will get them the money, that is what I hear them talking. I often pressed them to borrow money and pay interest on the money and keep their good mares, that they never could make money out of horse-breeding unless they had good mares.

3608. Do you think anything can be done by offering prizes?—That would be very good, and I think it has done a great deal of good, but still the poor man what prize he gets cannot induce him to keep what he can sell for from £25 to £50 and he has the money to pay.

3609. Sir T. Esmonde.—You mentioned about the cheapness of the rates from America, you mentioned that you can bring a horse over for £3?—That is what I paid.

3610. Have you any idea how the American rates compare with the Irish railway rates?—Oh, yes, every way, you can get five tons of stuff from New York to Liverpool for five shillings a ton and you will pay fourteen shillings a ton from Liverpool to Dundalk.

3611. Then you consider that the Irish railway rates are excessive?—I am talking of the steamboat now, I brought thirty horses nearly 1,100 miles in one carriage for 250 dollars, £50, and I suppose they would charge about five times that much in England, or more.

3612. Then as to the quality of American horses you say you have had a good deal of experience in American horses, you have bought them and sold them over here?—I have got some of them yet and I could sell you a couple or three very good ones too.

3613. Do you find taking them generally they are as good as the Irish horses?—I don't say so, they are not, but for some purposes they are very good, but they are not as good as the Irish horses at all.

3614. For what purposes are they good?—For harness and going quick.

3615. That is the American trotter?—I don't call them the American trotter at all but the American harness horse.

3616. Then you distinguish between the harness horse and the trotter?—They are two different classes.

3617. And you have no experience of the American trotter?—I have, and I have one of them now, if you come down I will lay a wager with you and trot you for some money if you like, but he has as good action as any harness horse in Dublin, but if you loose his head and let him go he will touch the ground, and if you get hold of him by the head and drive him along he will step out. If you want a horse to step you must get hold of him by the head and not let him go slithering along.

3618. For harness purposes you think the American horses are as good as the Irish?—I say not, they are not worth as much money, not but I bid 1,630 dollars for a harness horse got by a Hackney stallion, and he was bought by a millionaire in Chicago, he went for 1,650 dollars, that was £330.

3619. And I think you also said that you would not approve of branding American horses, you thought that would do no good to the home purchaser?—I think not, I don't think anything you could do with him, brand him or not, it would not rise him or fall him because they are only for a certain class. Out of 700 horses that you will see in Chicago in a day perhaps you would not buy ten; perhaps, one day you might might buy ten and you might be a week there

and you would not buy one, I was six weeks there buying fifty-six horses.

3620. Yes, but I mean American horses brought over here and sold in England as Irish horses?—I never knew any of them to be done that with.

3621. Do you think if they were branded that would be prevented?—I don't know, I cannot answer the question, everyone would know then that they were American.

3622. Mr. CAREW.—You spoke of breeding from a Hackney?—Yes, sir.

3623. The mare that you would mate with a Hackney would require to be a better shape and make than the one you would mate with a thoroughbred?—It would, with better neck and shoulders and well ribbed and straight on her legs with plenty of bone.

3624. So far as you are concerned, you would prefer the thoroughbred produce to the Hackney produce?—I prefer a thoroughbred horse for getting hunters, for a Hackney, in my opinion, won't get any hunter; but a Hackney, if he gets mated with a good sort of mare, will get a fine-going carriage horse.

3625. It is more difficult to mate with the Hackney than with a thoroughbred?—There are plenty of thoroughbreds that if you mate them with Irish mares you will get nothing but weeds. I keep three thoroughbred stallions at present, and I would not let them cover any mare unless she pleased me, because it only gives your horse a bad name, they are bringing wretches of mares there, and I would rather give them £5 or £10 and let them go somewhere else; in fact, I would not let them have the service of the horse.

3626. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say you have had no experience of breeding from half-bred horses?—I have not.

3627. I suppose you have bought horses that were by half-bred horses?—Indeed I did, and sold them for hunters at big prices; I heard it after.

3628. You have no particular objection to horses got by half-bred horses?—Not the least.

3629. Don't you think a stallion that was got by a thoroughbred horse out of a mare got by a thoroughbred horse is just as likely to be as good a stallion as a Hackney?—A first-rate stallion for harness horses, but not to get racehorses; we don't want any stallions in this country to get racehorses, we only want them to get hunters, or stepping horses with plenty of bone.

3630. Do you agree with Messrs. East and Wimbush, for instance, who say that the best upstanding carriage horses are got by a thoroughbred horse?—I daresay the best is, but I think there is got as good by Hackney horses as there is got by thoroughbred horses.

3631. You are aware that East and Wimbush, who are carriage horse dealers, have expressed a strong opinion contrary to the advantage of introducing Hackneys?—I know East and the whole breed of them these fifty years; many men have many minds; I sell them horses.

3632. You are aware they have expressed that opinion?—I am not aware of anything, I did not see it in the paper, or look at it; my chief point is to buy cheap and sell dear.

3633. Would you agree with such an opinion?—I would, they have great experience, because every horse they buy from me they must have the pedigree from me or from my son; they take them all down, and they have a better right to know than any body else, but I don't know what they said or suggested.

3634. You said you sold twenty-six harness horses?—Yes, but I did not tell you who I sold them to.

3635. I don't want to know?—I will put it in writing, but I won't make it public; I will put in writing what I got for them, and I will put the two together.

3636. You sold twenty-six harness horses, at any rate, at an average price of £90, that was all round?—All round; some of them perhaps as high as £140, some at £65 to £70, but the round number was £90 a piece.

3637. Out of the twenty-six, five were got by Hackneys?—Yes, and they got Hackney pedigrees.

3638. The other ones were got by thoroughbred horses?—Everyone of them by thoroughbred horses to my opinion.

3639. So that there were five horses by thoroughbreds to one got by the Hackney?—Decidedly.

3640. And these were all harness horses?—They are all harness horses, but most likely I will get some of them back yet that will go cantering in harness, and I will make hunters of them.

3641. You say there are a lot of mares in the country quite unsuitable to put to the ordinary thoroughbred horse, and that would produce nothing but weeds?—My opinion is, that if the thoroughbred horse is 15·2 to 15·3, with plenty of bone and short legs, and has good stepping action, they may get it, but unless the horse is that I would think it a very bad purpose to put them to.

3642. Do you find a good brood mare is invariably a good-looking animal?—Yes, but the looks of a mare or horse is nothing until you try them.

3643. Do you mean to say you can stand out there and say that mare will be a good brood mare, and her produce will be worth £90 as a three-year-old?—I would say nothing at all unless I saw her move.

3644. But if you saw her move?—Then I would give you my opinion.

3645. Don't you think mares that you despise to look at breed very good fillies; very often a big upstanding mare with action and style never produces anything as good as herself?—They must be mated with the right kind of horse.

3646. You do think you can judge a brood mare by her personal appearance?—Yes; and if I knew her breeding and saw her appearance, the looks she has and the way she stands and walks, and if she gets mated with a thoroughbred horse that suited her, or a Hackney horse.

3647. Have you ever attended any of those shows of the Dublin Society to select mares for prizes?—I think I did.

3648. Could you always pick out the mare that had proved herself to be the best brood mare by looking at her?—I give my opinion, you cannot always do that, and perhaps you along with me; the two of us could not do it.

3649. Do you find at these mare shows that the mare that has got first prize is always the most distinguished mare in the country?—Sometimes a man may make a mistake, because many a young lady looks well and after she has gone for a time she turns out wrong. Personal appearance is all very well; to have good bones and legs, there is nothing like it to start to breed with; and action—action for a harness horse—if they have not that I would not be breeding from them only for a hunter.

3650. Mr. WRENCH.—With regard to those five that were got by Hackneys, were they as good as the other twenty-one?—They were not worse; I think they were nearly at an average. Some were extraordinary good and some were not just so good, but I think they were worth the average perhaps of £90 a piece.

3651. Have you sold any horses in England on the way back from America—any American horses that you brought to England?—Yes, a great many at Liverpool, and a great many in England since.

3652. Have you sold any American horses in Liverpool to Messrs. East?—I am not to answer you that question unless I think proper. Well, when you ask it, I did sell him; out of the forty-six he only picked eleven in March. I thought he should have bought the whole of them, and instead of that he only picked eleven; he said he did not like them.

3653. And do you think the fact of dealers being able to buy the American horse in England prevents them coming over to Ireland to buy horses?—Altogether. But a good coaching horse is worth more

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money in America than it is in Paris, where I used to get the best prices. I could buy a pair of good carriage horses in London, and give a good price for them, and sell them in Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, or Boston for more money than they would bring in these places.

3654. The good horses are dearer in America than here?—Yes, but the commoner horses sold for the working classes are cheap in America.

3655. So that it is the common horses in America that are ruining the common horses here?—They are ruining the farmers of the country.

3656. There is no trade for bad horses?—The farmers cannot get any price for their horses; where they used to get £30 they are down to £7 or £10 a piece these three years.

3657. Do you think the trade in harness horses is as profitable as the trade in hunters?—No; if you had the customer for the hunter it is a good deal the best.

3658. Which is the steadiest trade?—Of course the harness trade; there are some dealers buy harness horses, and give good prices, and they hardly ever buy a hunter; the hunting trade is a trade by itself.

3659. Can you always sell a good harness horse?—Yes, you can.

3660. If he has good action?—Action is everything; there is no use your having a harness horse without action; buy them if you can that would step as high as wild geese can fly; then you will sell them.

3661. Then you don't think a horse could step too high for sale?—No, if he goes straight.

3662. You think it is as safe a game for farmers to breed horses with good action as to breed hunters?—A farmer might have seven foals, and he might not have a hunter out of the seven, and he might breed another seven and have four pretty fair harness horses, and he would get a fair price for them out of the seven.

3663. Then it is more certain although you don't get as big a price?—I think for the farmer it is easier for him to breed harness horses than it is to breed hunters; in the first place if you want to breed a hunter to go across country you must have good land that they are bred and reared upon, and you must keep them well and train them well. If a farmer has a harness horse only half trained he can sell him, but there is no gentleman or dealer that wants to buy a hunter if he is not thoroughly broken to ride and with manners.

3664. And if you see a good looking horse in a fair with good action do you stop to find out how he is bred before you try to buy him?—I did not care twopence if he had action and looks to please me how he was bred; I would not bother the man to ask him because every five out of ten would give you a pedigree that the horse never was bred by at all.

3665. Do you think other dealers follow your custom and buy what they see and like?—I won't answer for any other dealer's opinion but my own.

3666. You yourself would not think of asking how he was bred?—Not if I liked the horse, not even a hunter, if I liked the way he walked and cantered, because there is a power of them sold with false pedigrees.

3667. You think that as long as good horses, good horses to look at, are bred in Ireland, people will come over to buy them, no matter how they are bred?—No matter how they are bred.

3668. You have heard that some people object to the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland; do you think the mere fact of there being a few Hackney stallions in Ireland would prevent people coming over to buy horses, and giving as big prices for a good horse at a fair?—Twenty years ago the best coaching horse that could be found was in Yorkshire, and when they started to introduce these Hackneys they all gave up breeding coachers, and turned to the Hackney breeding.

3669. Why?—Because they made more money out of it; I bought over 100 Hackneys myself, sires and mares, and took them out to America.

3670. What did you find the result of the Hackneys in America?—I found that I sold them and got a good price for them, and got a profit, and I did not care what they done with them then. In Chicago any kind of a stud horse, if he is got by a Hackney, sells for more money than any other class of horse.

3671. And have you formed any opinion as to whether a good Hackney stallion, such as you describe, or a Cleveland Bay, would be a more suitable horse for Ireland; how do you like the Cleveland Bay?—I don't know anything at all about them, I never saw a Cleveland Bay only some years ago, when I was in Yorkshire, and I was very sorry I did not buy him; he was a coaching stallion, and the man wanted me to buy him and I did not; I was very sorry for it, and went back to buy him, but he was then bought by a dealer, who castrated him, and sold him to Mr. Wimbush for £120 for a carriage horse.

3672. Have you formed any opinion why Ireland produces much better horses than any other country?—I will give you my own opinion—we have the air, we have the water, and we have the ground they are bred on, and my opinion is that for man, or horse, or beast there is no better place in the world, if they had only contentment and acted straightforward, than Ireland, to breed anything.

3673. You think they can beat the world in breeding horses?—Yes, or cattle, or even Christians, if they only conducted themselves; they breed them with bone and strength, and they can stand more hardship than any other man in the world, unless a nigger.

3674. And I think you said that the big jobmasters, like East and Wimbush, and these men, are going in for a lighter class of harness horses than formerly?—So they told me; I used to buy horses for different people, and I used to buy them 17 hands high, and 17.2 coach horses, and they say that the carriages that they are building in London and through England, are all on a smaller scale, with lighter springs and lighter wheels, and they like these horses to be all under 16, from 15.2.

3675. With good action?—Oh, must have action,

3676. I think you said you had sold some produce long ago by a Hackney stallion, Great Gun?—Yes.

3677. Do you know anything about the mares, were they small mares, or what kind of mares?—I knew one very nice little blood mare, 15 hands high, and the man paid me £3 for the service of Great Gun, and she bred a little chestnut horse, 15.3, with great action; he kept him for a sire for two years. I bought him when he was 4 off, and gave him £100 for him, and I got him castrated, and sold him the April following to a Frenchman to go to Paris; he paid me very well, and he was a very nice horse.

3678. You got a good price for him?—He paid me very well.

3679. It was stated, I think yesterday, that there were not many troopers bought north of the Boyne?—Might I ask you where north of the Boyne is; is that the tune they call "The Boyne Water," that is, north of Drogheda. I saw troopers bought in Derry for the Government; I saw them bought in Saintfield; I saw them bought in Antrim, Clones, Enniskillen, Ballybay Armagh, Moy, and Lisburn.

3680. And they are still bought in those fairs?—I have not been very much in the fairs in the North these twelve months.

3681. But within the last few years?—Yes, they still come to the North and buy them; I saw this General that is dead about a year ago, General Ravenhill, I saw him several times in the Moy buying troopers, light troopers and artillery horses—and blacks for the Queen's Life Guards.

3682. Then I think, in answer to Mr. La Touche, you said you had bought very good hunters got by half-bred horses?—Yes, by half-bred horses, I found

it out after; they turned out to be very good horses to the people I sold them to.

3683. Do you think these half-bred horses would get animals with as good action as a good Hackney stallion?—No; they won't get as high action or as true action.

3684. They would get better hunters?—Yes; unless some of these half-bred horses you talk about could step as high and true as a Hackney, but if they did not, they would not get good harness horses.

3685. But if they could step as high it would be too high for a hunter?—Yes; a hunter wants to walk well and trot straight, and give you a good feel when you are on his back.

The Commission adjourned to November 24th.

EIGHTH DAY.—TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH, 1896.

Present:—MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE, (in the Chair), HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM, SIR T. H. G. ESMONDE, M.P., MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P., COL. ST. QUINTIN, and MR. F. S. WRENCH.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. ALEXANDER H. SPROULE, Dunamona House, Fintona, examined.

3686. CHAIRMAN.—You are a justice of the peace, and live in county Tyrone?—Yes.

3687. You have had considerable experience in horse-breeding?—Yes.

3688. What class of horses have you usually bred? Thoroughbreds, Hackneys, Shire horses, and Clyde horses.

3689. Have you some thoroughbred mares of your own?—Yes, I had.

3690. You have not any now?—Not at present.

3691. Have you got thoroughbred Hackney mares?—Yes; I have at present.

3692. Do you keep a stallion?—Yes.

3693. What breed is the stallion?—I kept a thoroughbred stallion, a Hackney stallion, and a half bred stallion.

3694. Have you got them all now?—No.

3695. What stallions have you now?—I have none now.

3696. You have no stallions at present?—No.

3697. Are you still breeding horses?—Yes.

3698. How many years have you been breeding horses?—For the last nine years I have been breeding horses myself, thoroughbred Hackneys and half-bred Hackneys.

3699. What mares do you put the Hackneys to?—I put the Hackney mares to the Hackney horse, and I put the half-bred mares to a horse got by "Old Mount Palatine"; he was half-bred by "Newminster" by "Touchstone." I put the half-bred mares to him, and I put the common mares of the country to the Hackney horse.

3700. Do you keep the young stock yourself, or do you sell them?—I generally keep them until they are four or five years old.

3701. And then you sell them?—Yes.

3702. I suppose the produce would be harness horses?—Yes; harness horses generally, and fairly good action.

3703. Do the farmers in your county generally sell their horses at four and five years old?—The poorer class sell them younger, as foals or year olds.

3704. Where do they sell their horses?—In the local fairs.

3705. And where do they go to do you know?—They are bought up, some of them by men who feed them and take these horses to the fairs afterwards. They keep them until they are five years old, and they are taken to the Moy fair.

3706. You mean the local men?—Yes.

3707. As far as you know do the young horses that are sold by the farmers stay in the same neighbourhood until they are four or five years old?—As a rule they do.

3708. Do they breed many horses from Hackney stallions in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

3709. They use them chiefly?—Yes; at present that is so.

3710. They do not breed many hunters there?—They tried to breed them, but the class of horses the Royal Dublin Society sent down there—I have yet to see a good one out of them.—I have seen nothing but weeds bred out of them.

3711. They are not good horses?—It may not be the horse's fault, but as a rule the horses are not good.

3712. Are there any registered sires under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme there?—Yes; two or three.

3713. Registered?—Well, they are supposed to be registered.

3714. Are they advertised as registered?—Yes.

3715. Do you know if many horses are bred in your county or district for the purpose of being turned into hunters?—It is not a hunting district.

3716. I know, but still I mean are many such horses bred there?—Any horses that are bought are generally bought in the Moy and brought up here to Dublin. It is more of a driving class of horse that are reared in the North.

3717. Are there many Hackney stallions in your part of the country?—There is quite a few at the present time there.

3718. Nice horses?—Yes, fairly good horses.

3719. What size?—The smallest horses I know, Paragon, is about 15.1½; Cyrus 15.3¼. The Limavady Stud Company, I don't know about the size of their horse, but he was a very nice looking horse. There was a bay horse from the county Donegal or Derry, a very fine Hackney horse.

3720. The farmers usually use these Hackney stallions?—Yes, they do, they are more suitable to them. I may state that I was entirely in favour of thoroughbred horses myself. I have been paying particular attention to the breeding of horses for the past twenty or thirty years, and I was always in favour of thoroughbred horses. I bought thoroughbred stallions and tried the very best I could to breed them in the North of Ireland, but I found the climate of the North of Ireland was too cold and wet for half-bred foals, they are tender and cannot stand the cold. As a rule they are not suitable for farming purposes; our farmers are rather small there. Then again the Clyde horse, he is too heavy and too big to suit the poorer class of farmers, and the Hackney is what you might term the "go between," he is better suited for the class of mare they have there.

3721. Have you any experience of what are called half-bred sire horses that are got by a thoroughbred

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horse?—Yes, I bred a half-bred horse which stands now at Derry. I do not care for breeding from a half-bred unless one cross, that is a cross from a Hackney horse and a thoroughbred mare—a stallion from that I consider a capital good horse to cross the country mares with.

3722. But you would not approve of a cross between a thoroughbred horse and a mare got by a thoroughbred horse?—No, that is unless I was quite satisfied if the mare had a stain of Clyde or common breeding in her. As a rule when they are crossed out the minute you begin to cross again, you throw up curbs, spavins, and unsoundness.

3723. Have you any experience of a stallion got by a thoroughbred horse out of a Hackney mare?—Well, no, I have not, I cannot speak as to that.

3724. You think it would make a useful sire?—I am speaking of Hackney horses bred from thoroughbred mares and a Hackney horse.

3725. Have you any experience of such a stallion got by a Hackney horse out of a thoroughbred mare?—That is what I am speaking about.

3726. You know of one?—Yes, I do.

3727. You think he is a good sire?—My experience of that horse and of the Hackney horses in the country is this—I have not seen 3 per cent. of foals bred from Hackney horses of any description, that is of good thoroughbred Hackney horse and a half-bred mare, I have not seen 3 per cent of the foals with any unsoundness whatever; and beyond all doubt, I am not afraid of contradiction to say it, that I have seen badly blemished mares put to Hackney horses, and their foals came out perfectly sound.

3728. You do not consider that the Royal Dublin Society's scheme works well in your district?—I do not. But I do not blame the Royal Dublin Society, but rather the rate-- the valuation is by far too high. The fixing it at £150 is not for the benefit of those the horses are sent out for at all. If the valuation was put at £20 then it would benefit the poor man, but now on the contrary you are benefiting the man who is quite independent. The value of the farm now must be not to exceed £150.

3729. You consider that to be too high?—Yes, far too high.

3729A. The smaller farmers have no chance or a bad chance against the big man?—They have no chance at all.

3730. Do many of the small farmers breed horses?—Yes, a very large number do.

3731. You do not know as a matter of fact what the registered sires are in your district?—I do not know the names, I know the horses. There is a horse from Fermanagh—the owner is Mr. Mitchell—a fairly good horse too—a chestnut horse. There is a horse comes from Augher—a brown horse, but I do not think very much of him. But in fact we have not the class of mares to breed to a thoroughbred horse in my district.

3732. What would you suggest as the best means of getting a better class of horse in your district or of improving the breed of the horses?—Well, as I said before, the offspring from the thoroughbred horse and the class of mares that are in the district in which I reside are of no value whatever to the majority of the small farmers for farming; their land is heavy and their farms are small. The Clydesdale horse's offspring is too big, the farmers consider; and he would require too much feeding, and he is too soft to stand out in the winter. The Hackney horse is a hardy horse, which I know from experience by having the foal of the Hackney, of the thoroughbred, and of the Clyde, and seeing them running together. The Hackney horse meets the purposes of the poor farmer, and he is a horse he can take to fair and sell, and if he cannot sell him to one he can to another.

3733. And I take it you consider the best means of improving the horse in your district will be the use of the Hackney stallion?—By all means, and then you will have a class of mares that will be worth breeding from.

3734. Have you any experience as to the importation of American horses in the North?—Yes, I have seen a great many of them, and I have great experience of American horses, and I consider him very unsuitable for Ireland—he is too long in the back, too long in the legs, and too short at the ribs, and too wide at his kidneys.

3735. Are they scattered about your county?—Quite a few.

3736. They are bought in Belfast?—Yes, and brought up.

3737. Have you any suggestion you would like to make as to these imported horses?—I think that as to all American horses—in my opinion we should take a leaf out of the American book, we should brand the horses coming in from America, and by all means put a duty on them. I should also think so far as stallions are concerned in Ireland, stallions, bulls, rams, and pigs, and everything else, there should be a licence for keeping them, and they should pass an examination. The majority of the poorer farmers have not the means to pay for a good horse, and they breed from inferior horses, leaving a very bad class of animals in the country.

3738 Mr. CARLW.—You say, Mr. Sproule, that Hackneys are the best breed for your district?—In my opinion they are.

3739. And that is only for harness horses?—For farming and harness horses.

3740. Nothing more?—Yes, I think you can get fairly good hunting horses from them.

3741. You think so?—Yes, I am sure of it. I have seen some fairly good hunters from a thoroughbred mare and a Hackney stallion, generally a good short-backed horse.

3742. Can you give us any idea of the prices obtained for the Hackney produce in different fairs?—They are different, and range from £45 to £65.

3743. At what age?—At five years old.

3744. Can farmers in your district keep them so long?—The poorer farmers cannot.

3745. At what age would they be obliged to sell them?—Well, from foals. I can only speak I suppose from what I have seen.

3746. Yes, your own experience?—I have seen some sell from £8 to £15 coming off very poor mares in my district.

3747. Where would they go to?—They are bought up by the bigger farmers.

3748. Who feed them and sell them as five-year olds?—Yes.

3749. And you find, I think, you said that the produce of thoroughbred and half-bred is rather soft and too delicate for your climate?—I have tried them myself. I have an island on Lough Erne, and I was breeding extensively, and I went in experimenting in breeding horses long before I thought of any Commission, and I was opposed completely to Hackney horses, but I was advised to try them, and I put the colts on this island, and they all, during the summer, did fairly well; I had half-breds, Hackneys, and pure thoroughbreds, and some Clydesdales on this island. I found, as to the half-bred foals and young horses, at the latter part of December, I had to take them in and house them. The Clydesdale colts, I had to take them all in in March; they could not stand out at all. They all got hay on the grass, and the Hackneys kept all the winter, and were in better condition actually than the colts turned out of the stables after feeding them, and that was the first thing turned me to Hackney horses. I consider them hardier horses, and can stand more cold.

3750. Then you disapprove of thoroughbreds mating with half-breds?—I disapprove of a thoroughbred mating with our class of mares.

3751. You do not think your class of mares should

mate with thoroughbreds?—I do not; but I am very fond of the thoroughbred horse.

3752. How would you improve these mares?—By crossing with a Hackney horse.

3753. The Hackney would give bone and substance, and then cross that produce with a thoroughbred?—In time you might; but it will take years to remedy it. It never will be done by the thoroughbred horse.

3754. You do not consider the Royal Dublin Society horses good ones?—Well, they have been a complete failure in our district. When the farmers came there with their mares, before the Committee appointed to select the mares they are nothing but big fat mares, and, with no fault to the Committee, it appears to me that beef hides a great many blemishes, the poor farmer gets no chance whatever. I have experience myself in breeding and keeping stallion horses, and I went out and saw the class of mares these farmers had, and not only saw the foals from my own horse, but I saw the foals coming in at foot of the mares when they were coming in to be served by my horse. I find that the farmers have some excellent and good little mares, but they are not up to size, and do not have beef enough to pass the Committee.

3755. You think the Committee reject them because they have not beef enough?—Because they are not big enough.

3756. But if they were big enough they would be a good class of mare to breed from?—Yes; and some of these little mares breed fine big foals.

3757. Col ST. QUINTIN.—I should like to know if, in the course of your experience with the mixed breed of Hackneys, have you known the Hackneys put to big powerful mares to produce weighty draught horses?—As a rule, if I were keeping a Hackney stallion to breed with in the country, I would select one with as light bone as possible, because the minute you cross him my experience is they become strong and heavy in the bone, and if you keep a very boned horse you will get very heavy bone stock afterwards.

3758. In fact, they throw heavier stock than they are themselves?—Yes; that is why I say I would breed between Hackney sires and thoroughbred mares, and you have blood and strength combined.

3759. Do you find any of these mixed breeds run into that class of horse you are speaking of—the Clydesdale; you say it gets too big a horse—is it a weighty good horse, with activity?—The Clydesdale, as a rule, has very good action, but he is not what you would call a roadster.

3760. He is a weighty horse?—For a big farm nothing could be better than a Clydesdale; I keep them.

3761. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said you had a good deal of experience of breeding from thoroughbred horses?—Yes.

3762. Which produce sold the best, the produce out of your mares by the thoroughbred horse or the produce out of the mares by the Hackney horse?—I got a higher price for the produce of some of my mares by thoroughbred horses.

3763. What did you sell these for?—I got as high as £125 for some of the hunters; that is some years ago.

3764. Were your mares of the same class as the general mares of the country?—They were not.

3765. They were of a better class of mares?—They were.

3766. But you are quite of opinion that the thoroughbred is not the right cross for the mares in your district?—Not in my district.

3767. And they breed chiefly there for harness, do they?—Chiefly for harness and farming purposes.

3768. What are the chief fairs about you where horses are sold?—Do you mean local fairs?

3769. No, where most horses are sold?—Well, Moy.

3770. They go up from your district to the Moy?—Oh, yes.

3771. I think you said that you did not like breeding from a half-bred horse?—I would not care for a horse bred between a thoroughbred and a Clyde, or bred between a thoroughbred and one of these mongrel mares.

3772. But between a thoroughbred and one of the ordinary Irish mares, would you not consider it safe to breed from a horse like that?—No, I would not. If I bred from a half-bred at all, it would be where I would have pure blood on both sides, and the same thing if you bred from a pure-bred Hackney horse and a thoroughbred mare, or a purebred thoroughbred horse and a Hackney mare, or a purebred Clyde and a thoroughbred horse. As soon as you throw in mongrel breeding, you are very liable to throw up the hereditary diseases that exist in horses.

3773. You are aware that at present only thoroughbred horses are registered under the Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes, I am.

3774. Would you be in favour of registering any other horses?—I would, I would be strongly in favour of registering the horses I say, that is the horses got from a Hackney mare and a thoroughbred horse, or a thoroughbred horse and a Hackney mare, I would be strongly in favour of registering them.

3775. Would you register pure Hackneys?—I would register all pure bred Hackneys and all half-bred of that breeding.

3776. What about the registry of pure bred Clydesdale horses?—I would, by all means.

3777. In fact you would register all classes of pure bred horses in the district?—Decidedly I would, and not only register them but have them passed by an independent veterinary surgeon, a surgeon out of the district who did not know the parties that owned the horse, I don't mean to say any partiality would be shown, but it would give more confidence to the public in general.

3778. You think it would give more confidence if the veterinary certificates required were obtained from a veterinary surgeon sent down specially?—I believe it would.

3779. And you think that the breeders in your district, the small farmers, are capable of forming an opinion for themselves as to what animals suit them best?—I think they are. As a general thing the North of Ireland men are pretty sharp and shrewd men in breeding horses.

3780. If there were any public funds placed at their disposal for improving horses how would you take the opinion of the breeders in your district?—I don't understand the question as you put it to me.

3781. Supposing there were public funds for the purchase of horses you describe, how would you take the opinion of the breeders in your district as to what horses they would wish sent down, you have not considered that?—I have not.

3782. There is no way of taking the opinion at present?—There is not, but I could very soon take the opinion of the people, once you put the horses in the market you will have no trouble in getting the opinion.

3783. You think the best way would be to send down a horse and test the opinion that way?—I believe if there is to be any improvement made by horses coming into the district they must not be horses owned by private parties, they must be owned by the Government or the Royal Dublin Society themselves, sent down independent of any party, and I think if that is done it would be far cheaper in the end than the way it is managed at present.

3784. And you think it would be much the most certain way of testing the opinion?—I am quite satisfied it will be more certain, I know for a fact that a large percentage of mares that have been shown there for the purpose of breeding to the Royal Dublin Society's horses, after getting certificates of passes I have seen them go to other horses, and not breed from the Royal Dublin Society's horses at all after they had obtained the certificate.

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3785. Then I gather from what you have said you think the small farmers require more help than the big men over £150 valuation?—I consider a man with a valuation of over £150 in my district wants no help whatever, as a rule they are generally independent men.

3786. And you think it would be quite within his power, no matter what the different breeds of horses in his district, to guard against using any of these breeds in his mares if he wished to do so?—Yes, I think so.

3787. You think there would be no danger if Hackney blood, or Clydesdale blood, or any other blood was objected to by him. You think there would be no danger of his getting such blood among his brood mares if he took the trouble to find out how they were bred?—I would not like to answer that question. I think there should be no special limit to the number of mares sent down by the Royal Dublin Society. I think, as I said before, if the horses are owned by the Society or Government and sent in there for breeding purposes, and sent under a competent committee, that those mares should be all shown and the like of that before they were served by the horses, then you will have a chance, and no mare to be served by a man whose valuation is up to £150. I would say put the valuation at £50 and strike off £100 and you will be coming nearer benefiting the poor man.

3788. Would you insist on the mares that are put to these horses being sound?—I would.

3789. You would not give any privilege to the man who had an unsound mare?—Well, I would. I have seen some unsound mares breeding very good foals.

3790. Where would you draw the line?—Hereditary unsoundness is different. I would not breed from hereditary unsoundness.

3791. You would disqualify all mares if they proved to have hereditary unsoundness?—Decidedly I would.

3792. I think you said you found the Hackneys hardier. Do you find they come to maturity sooner?—I find they come to maturity much sooner, and as a rule are very easily trained, they are very tractable.

3793. And very sound?—And very sound. I have yet to see three unsound fillies from all classes of mares put to Hackney horses. I cannot think of one that I have seen yet.

3794. CHAIRMAN.—You said you have no objection to the stallion that is a cross between two pure breeds such as the thoroughbred mare and the Hackney horse or the thoroughbred horse and the Clydesdale mare?—I think it would help to improve the breed very much.

3795. What in your opinion constitutes a pure breed?—I consider a thoroughbred horse which is registered in the stud book is a pure-bred horse, and I consider the Hackney horse which is registered in the Hackney stud book is a pure-bred horse.

3796. Why do you consider the Hackney a pure-bred horse, you know the stud book has not been in existence long?—Yes, they are like our Kerry cattle recently introduced, but we must start somewhere.

3797. Do you think the fact of their being in the Hackney stud book constitutes a pure breed?—I do not, at the first time they introduced Hackney horses into our district they allowed sires to be introduced in the register but not in the stud book, but that is done away with now.

3798. But it is quite possible the produce of these horses that are registered are now in the stud book?—I look upon an entered horse as a half-bred, and a registered horse is as near pure breeding as they can get.

3799. Have the horses in your district improved or deteriorated?—Since the introduction of the Hackneys I see quite an improvement.

3800. I see in your replies to queries you say that you consider that they have deteriorated?—That is the mares have.

3801. They have deteriorated?—They have.

3802. You attribute that to the farmers selling their best stock, I suppose?—They do, they generally sell off their best young stock to realise cash.

3803. At any rate the farmers of the country whose opinion you consider very valuable on the subject of what horses they should use have allowed their animals to deteriorate?—Well, I think there is great fault to be found in many ways; until lately the majority of horses were kept by a certain class, and of course the farmers were entitled to put their mares to these horses or else select the poorest horses in the neighbourhood, whatever horses they could get for the cheapest money, and they allowed their mares to deteriorate, that is the reason I would place a licence on them. There are horses travelling the country, and all they are fit for is to be shot for hounds, they are actually ruining the mares of the country.

3804. Does it rather take away from the value of the opinion of the farmers of the district that they have allowed their mares to deteriorate by the use of these horses?—Well, yes, it does.

3805. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you find, as a matter of fact, that Hackney stallions in your neighbourhood are popular with the farmers?—Very I would have Hackney stallions at the present time I might state to you, but I was off in Canada and had my horses sold before I went away. I would like to keep a Hackney horse and a thoroughbred horse. I believe they are the only horses fit for the country, but the Hackney horse is the only horse for the North of Ireland, that is my opinion.

3806. Mr. CAREW.—You say the farmer is quite competent in the case of Government horses being sent down to select good ones?—No, I would not say they are quite competent, but they got such a terrible poisoning by those horses that were sent to them as Royal Dublin Society's horses, that in 1894 there were three—Mr. Herdman's I am sure of—three horses of the Royal Dublin Society stood in Omagh, and during the whole season I don't think those three horses served nine mares, the farmers were so much against them.

3807. Sir T. ESMONDE.—What was that owing to?—Owing to the breeding of some of the horses. Mr. Herdman has a good horse. I like him. I consider him a little light, but a first-class animal.

3808. Had these animals been in the country before?—Yes.

3809. They had been for some years in the country?—Yes.

3810. And the farmers did not approve of their progeny?—Not at all.

3811. At what age are horses usually sold with you?—In the Moy fair from four to five years and upwards.

3812. You don't sell them under four years old?—No, they would not be bought.

3813. What would be the average price that a farmer would get for a four-year-old at that fair?—What class of horse would you mean?

3814. The ordinary horse they breed in the country now?—I would say the average price might be £35 for a farmer.

3815. Mr. CAREW.—I think you said to me up to £60?—Yes, that is a good class of mare from big farmers.

3816. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Do you think £35 for a four-year-old pays a man to breed horses?—I think it does not pay a man unless he works his horse when young, but the majority commence to work their horses when two-year-old, the poorer classes of farmers.

3817. Mr. CAREW.—You said you preferred to breed from the pure blood on both sides?—I would have pure blood on both sides to breed from.

3818. There was a witness here the other day who said that the breeding from the pure blood on either side with violent crossing resulted in the produce having the faults of both and not the merits?—Well, my experience is that breeding from a half-bred horse you will have faults sometimes. If you breed from a pure-bred horse and a half-bred mare, as a rule you will have the produce thrown to the horse, because the strong blood is upon the horse's side, or whichever side has the purer blood you will find the foal thrown that way, but if you breed from a half-bred horse and the mongrel mares through the country, you don't know what you are going to get.

3819. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—These horses that you say are not sold until they are four or five years old, to what use are they put in the meantime?—To farming.

3820. And they are suitable animals for that particular purpose?—Yes.

3821. You think they are?—I consider the produce of the Hackneys are far more suitable for farmers.

3822. I mean horses that are sold in the fair of Moy which you say are not sold until four-year-old or later?—Four or five, they are not sold under four, generally five is the average.

3823. What I asked you was what are those horses used for?—After they are sold?

3824. No, before they are sold?—Well, a great many of those horses that are sold in the Moy, a large percentage, if you talk of the horses reared in the district I could answer you, but—

3825. I am speaking of the horses reared in the district?—A great many of them have been worked on farms and bought up then by feeders, who, when he sees a young horse that is turning out to be a small horse, he buys him and feeds him and takes him to the Moy and makes money of him.

3826. CHAIRMAN.—These small farmers in the district, I suppose, breed for the purpose of sale more than for their own use?—They do.

3827. You have been in Canada, I think you said?—Yes.

3828. What is your opinion of the Canadian horses?—I consider the horse of the north-west territory a capital good farming horse.

3829. How are they bred?—They are bred from a much better class of mares than we have in this country, and then they are bred from pure stock brought out from this country again. In the first place there are a class of mares in the north-west, my early recollection of it, very well bred mares, something similar to what you have in the south of Ireland; then they crossed those mares with the Clyde horse, and they have got a very good class of farming horses in the north-west territory. But the American horse from the United States is a very inferior class of horse.

3830. That is the horse that comes over here?—Yes, there are a good many of the north-west horses coming over.

3831. You think they are better?—They are fairly good farming horses indeed, not as a carriage horse or hunter, but they are a fairly good tram and farming horse, they have good ribs.

3832. I suppose you would suggest that they should be branded as well as the others?—Decidedly I would, I would brand everything coming from there, and I would have a licence put on all stallions serving mares in the country, I would put on a heavy licence, and if they passed a veterinary surgeon's examination I would reduce the licence.

3833. Mr. WRENCH.—You would put on a penal licence?—I would put on a penal licence for all stallions serving mares that had not passed a veterinary surgeon's examination.

3834. Have you thought at all of the amount?—I would not let a horse serve under £10 unless he passed a veterinary surgeon.

3835. And when he had passed that you would reduce that to a nominal fee?—I would.

Rev. A. STAPLES IRWIN, Tamlaght Rectory, examined.

3836. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Tamlaght, near Moneymore?—Yes.

3837. Do you breed horses?—Yes, I breed eight; that is the extreme of my breeding.

3838. What class of horses have you bred?—Well medium-class hunters from 13 st. 7 lb. up to 15 st., but the last I sold was very well able to carry 16 st.

3839. How have you bred them?—My first attempt at breeding was from a purebred "Birdcatcher" mare, a long time before some of you were born. This mare had had a foal to the famous horse "Slinge." I mention this particularly, and bear this in mind, "Slinge" was a thoroughbred horse; he was not with me. She had a foal secondly to a half-bred horse, a rather indifferent horse; but I saw both those foals, one of them when it was a three-year-old and the other when a two-year-old, and they were both thoroughbred. The reason why I mention that is this: I have a theory that a mare is influenced by the first horse or animal she is served by. I was staying with a friend in the county Tyrone, and we were driving up to a mountain to see some lake fishing, and one of the horses in the phæton I admired so much, a chestnut mare. I said, "Well, that is a beautiful mare." "Ah, yes, that mare has had two foals." I thought she had that because she was a little heavy in the middle. And when we came down from the lake in the evening, after dinner, we walked out to see those foals. And one of them was such a foal—the "Slinge" foal—such a foal! I never saw more beautiful. The other foal was a very good foal. And I said, "It is a shame to put that mare in harness; send her up to Lord Caledon's horse 'Bay Hilton,' and have more of that class of foal." He sent her to Lord Caledon's horse, and she missed foal. Next year I happened to go down to the same place, and found him trying to make the mare plough, and she objecting to it, and the old steward was standing by. "Ah, ah, yes, sir, she will never do; you will kill the horse." I said, "It is a shame to put her into the plough at all; I will give you a £10 note for her." "Take it," said the steward, and I got the mare for £10. I want to carry out my theory, but I did not want to run the risk. I was a poor man, and I did not want to run the risk of breeding a weed from a thoroughbred mare and a thoroughbred horse, so I put her to another horse that Lord Caledon had—a literally half-bred horse by a thoroughbred horse out of a Clydesdale mare, but a beautiful horse all the while, fine action and nothing coarse about him." She had two foals to that horse, both thoroughbred, all the appearance of thoroughbred. I never kept my horses long. One of them I got one hundred guineas for, three years and three days old, and another I got eighty guineas for at three years old, so that they were good. I mention this particularly for my theory, that the first horse the mare has influences all her after progeny more or less, and that is carried out by the instance of the officer who had a mare in India served by a Quagga, and had a foal to this Quagga, Zebra, and it was brought back here to Ireland, and ever after when she was breeding here her foals had the natural stripes on the sides. And we all know that if a mare has a mule as her first foal, her foals have always abnormally long ears after. Well, now, my next attempt at breeding—you want to know something maybe of what they did. My next attempt at breeding was by "Old Swordsman" with a mare such as

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Rev. A. Staples Irwin.

the late Lord Mayo as Lord Naas would have ridden. I am a very old man and remember those things. This mare, her foal was hunted with the Ward Hounds for nine years.

3840. Mr. CAREW.—What was her foal by?—Her foal was by "Blarney," a thoroughbred. He hunted nine years with the Ward Hounds, never made a mistake, frequently gave them the lead, and frequently left them impounded and had hounds and stag to himself, was never tired at 15 stone; he was sold in England, and he went then to Yorkshire and won the Point to Point Steeplechase, five miles, 15 stone up.

3841. CHAIRMAN.—He was a good horse. I conclude these mares of yours were above the ordinary class of mares kept by the farmers in the country?—Well, now we have come on to that, I live in a country of chalk formation which is very much superior to the lime formation, for this reason, that geologically there is a good deal of silica in the ground, which is largely absorbed by the produce of the ground, the hay and grain, and produces a finer kind of bone than the lime will.

3842. You think the chalk formation is better adapted for breeding horses than the limestone formation?—Very much superior.

3843. Is the chalk formation all over this particular district?—It is not over the whole district, it is a sporadic production, it only covers it may be ten or twelve square miles.

3843A. And are there particularly good horses bred on that particular formation?—I have bred now four on that formation, and two of those that have been tried have been winners, one won at Punchestown last spring—Rock of Cashel.

3844. Do the farmers living on these farms always succeed in breeding?—They don't attempt to breed high-class horses, or they don't deserve to attempt to, because they won't feed their horses or mares. I feed my brood mares well always, and I feed my colts.

3845. What stallions do the farmers generally use?—They don't feed their mares when they are caring their foals. The better class of farmers certainly like a strong thoroughbred stallion.

3846. I suppose the farms are small, are they not?—They are, but still they are not so small.

3847. Are there good stallions in your neighbourhood, good thoroughbred stallions?—Not now in the immediate neighbourhood.

3848. Do you think the horses have deteriorated or improved, as a rule, in your district?—Well, I think they are improved because we have had some good horses in the neighbourhood. There was one remarkably good horse that I bred from Cashel, by Normanby out of Pannier by Dundee, a very nice horse, a good walker, trotter, and galloper.

3849. Have you any experience with regard to breeding from Hackney sires?—Well, I have seen a little of it but I never took much interest in it. We have had a very good Hackney horse in my neighbourhood a couple of years ago, and the progeny I did not like.

3850. I suppose the farmers in your neighbourhood use them a good deal, don't they?—No, they don't like them much. Last year we got two very good coaching Yorkshire horses into the neighbourhood, and I think they will take in the country and do good, they breed a better class of horses and bigger horses. Our neighbourhood produces harness horses and they breed a better horse with better shaped forelegs. The Hackney horse produces a round leg, the coaching horse is more of a blood horse, he produces a good flat leg with the sinew a good distance away from the bone

3851. Do you think that the introduction of the Hackney blood will have any effect on the breeding of Irish hunters?—Well, I don't know, I think the Irish hunters that get the prizes in Dublin are pretty much of the Hackney class. I really do.

3852. Have you any suggestions you would like to make with a view of encouraging farmers to keep better mares?—Yes; my suggestions would be to have a prize for a mare of positive quality, not of a comparative quality, because if you compare two bad things together, one very little better than the other, the better of the two is no use either. I would interfere largely with the liberty of the subject, and I would allow no stallion to be used that was not registered.

3853. And sound?—Oh, of course, that I mean, sound and registered as sound—that is, without any hereditary defect that would be likely to pass on.

3854. And I conclude otherwise suitable, with good bone and action and shape?—Oh, of course, but I have to say what very few breeders have to say, that I never bred a weed and never bred an unsound one, and I was able to follow my horses, and I never knew one of my breeding for years to go unsound except one.

3855. Are you breeding now?—Yes, and I have great faith in standard and tape lines.

3856. What are you breeding from now?—I am breeding now, and have been breeding for the last nine years, from a mare by Fitzjames out of a horse by Birdcatcher, an old mare now, from Cashel by Normanby out of Pannier by Dundee. Now Dundee I consider the very best blood there can be.

3857. This horse Cashel is the sire you use?—Cashel is the sire of the last five foals I have bred.

3858. He is up in your country now?—He is.

3859. Is he a registered horse, do you know?—Oh, no, far before your registered horses.

3860. But he might have been registered this year?—Oh, he is an old horse now; he is a very fine horse. I remember riding him. He was bred by a syndicate of flaxmen of Belfast. I don't know how it was he happened to come into my neighbourhood as a two-year-old from Newmarket, where he was in training, and I happened to ride him the next year or so after he came, and I never sat on a better horse.

3861. Is he called after the Rock of Cashel?—He is the sire of "Rock of Cashel." Well, I say not only did I never breed an unsound one or a weedy one, but all mine were, for the size of their parents, bigger in every way than their parents, and I suppose that was in consequence of the soil and provender they were reared upon and the good feeding besides.

3862. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Could you tell us what class of mares are in your neighbourhood, not those that you know yourself, but what is the average class of mares?—The average class of mares in the neighbourhood is not a good class.

3863. Do you mean they are small and light?—They are fair height, but they are poor-limbed animals, small legs, weedy.

3864. How have those mares been bred?—They have been bred from weedy thoroughbreds often, and smallish mares.

3865. And are they in the hands, do you think, of farmers who can breed a good horse, I mean beneficially—are they in the hands of very small farmers?—There are plenty of men with good large farms, but who will not give a price for a good mare.

3866. Then they only keep their worst; they sell their best?—Unfortunately, anything is good enough to breed from. My mare that I bred from was 16 hands high. Yesterday, just to check my judgment for to-day, I put a standard to a foal a year and seven months old; he stood 15.2½ high.

3867. Mr. CAREW.—What was it by?—By Cashel, and he measures nine inches under the knee, bigger than his five-year-old brother, whose leg I measured a while ago, which is nine inches under the knee.

3868. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think that it pays these very small men to try and breed horses at all—do you think they do themselves any good by trying to breed horses, the very small farmers?—Oh, they do.

3869. Do you think it is wise of them to try and do it?—There has been a very great patronage given to the Yorkshire horses, the coaching horses, two remarkably good horses in my neighbourhood now.

3870. What do they breed with these carriage horses?—There are a good lot of good up-standing carriage horses, and that is the class of horses that should be bred in the country. There is no use in breeding little horses, more than by breeding good sized horses, the farmer can get some little use of him when he is two off in light harrowing and that kind of thing, and then run him on and not sell him until four, and he then gets some payment as he goes along.

3871. What fees do these new horses that you say have come into the country, these coaching horses, what do they stand at, what fees do they serve at?—About £2 for the Yorkshire horses.

3872. And as a rule will the farmers go to the cheapest horse?—No, not with us.

3873 He will go to the good horse?—Yes, but the fee must not be extravagant. When I say extravagant I mean that it must not be anything over £2.

3874. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—What would you consider a proper fee for your district?—I think that if the Government gave some help it would be better to have a fee of not more than 30*s*., but it is really not the horses we want, it is the mares.

3875. Do you find that the brood mares are diminishing?—They are not up to the thing.

3876. Can you give any explanation why the brood mares have disappeared?—Oh, they were never there.

3877. Then you have never seen any of these old Irish mares that we have heard about?—I have seen them in Mullingar and at Ballinasloe, but not there? but there is a great difficulty in getting a good mare even there.

3878. In your district I suppose they are all small mares?—No, they measure a certain height, but they are three cornered. I have great faith in like begetting like, although I have seen great exceptions to that rule.

3879. Is that from want of care in breeding them or that they have no means?—When they have a fair mare they sell it.

3880. Are there many mares sold to foreign dealers?—We sometimes get good mares from the south or west of Ireland; they are bred there, made into condition, and sold in Moy fair, and at a particular season of the year the foreign dealers buy them frequently. The Hungarian men buy them and take them away and the produce of those mares will come back in troopers in consequence of the Government going to Hungary to buy troopers, which I think is a false economy. I have had some little experience of American horses in the neighbourhood, but they don't take there

3881. CHAIRMAN.—You don't think well of them?—No.

3882. Mr. CAREW.—You spoke of this Birdcatcher mare that was sent to the half-bred owned by Lord Caledon?—Yes.

3883. And two foals bred from her were sold at eighty guineas each?—No, one was sold at 105 guineas, a four-year-old, and another at eighty guineas, a three-year-old.

3884. How was this half-bred of Lord Caledon's bred?—Bred by the late Lord Clonmel out of a Clydesdale mare by a thoroughbred horse.

3885. What was the thoroughbred?—I don't know, but he was called "Corrector," because he came to mend our light legs in the north. He was a beautiful steppy horse, and got prizes at the North East Show as a horse likely to get harness horses.

3886. You spoke of a "Swordsman" mare?—Yes.

3887. Was she a thoroughbred?—No.

3888. How was she bred?—I don't know anything about her breeding except that she was by old "Swordsman," out of a half-bred.

3889. Was "Swordsman" a thoroughbred?—Yes; he was a remarkable horse.

3890. Then she mated with a thoroughbred?—She mated with "Blarney."

3891. And produced this great weight-carrying hunter?—Yes. "Blarney" was by "Claret" out of "Magnum" by "Magpie."

3892. So that you approve of mating half-bred mares with thoroughbreds to produce hunters?—Yes.

3893. And you disapprove of Hackneys?—I disapprove of them entirely. I would not let them into the country; they have lean legs, soft lean legs, and always gummy. You cannot batter my horses. You cannot puff their legs or that kind of thing, and although they look light, some of these well bred horses, they measure big; for instance there was a horse of mine exhibited at the Show last summer. An eminent dealer in Dublin said "My friend, you have put him in the wrong class; this should have been in Class 9, instead of Class 10"; he was bigger than the horse that got the prize in Class 10.

3894. You spoke of a colt one-and a-half years old whose measurements you took before coming up here?—Yes.

3895. He is by "Cashel," out of what sort of mare?—A half-bred mare; she is practically a thoroughbred mare by "Fitz-James," out of a dam by "Birdcatcher." I should say that, although I have only bred this, I have been an observant man of others breeding, and have had a good deal of guiding of other people in their choice of mates for mares.

3896. Mr. WRENCH.—What was the name of the Hackney stallion you referred to in your district?—I quite forget.

3897. Who did he belong to?—Mr. George; he is dead now; he was burned to death; his house was burned; but Mr. George has now a very fine Yorkshire horse.

3898. You cannot remember the name of the horse?—"Performer;" he was bought in England—Yorkshire—some time ago.

3899. Do you know whether he was a pure bred Hackney?—He was a pure bred Hackney in the Hackney Stud Book.

3900. And had you experience of other Hackneys there?—No; there was an old Norfolk trotter. Was he a Hackney?

3901. Not the Hackney I am speaking about?—There was a great Norfolk trotter in the neighbourhood—the sire of the late Lord Charlemont's "Broad Arrow"—"Bounding Willow" was in my neighbourhood for twenty years or something like that.

3902. He got very good stock?—Undersized; they seldom went over 15.2, 15.1, and 15.2, but beautiful action.

3903. Did they sell well?—Yes, and were very useful afterwards to the whipcord makers, because they required a great deal of it after they had gone a mile.

3904. Have you any other experience of Hackneys?—No, I never saw any except these two.

3905. And therefore anything you have stated is founded on that experience and nothing else?—They were never good.

3906. You have had no experience except these two?—None.

3907. How long have these two Yorkshire coaching horses been in your district?—We have had no experience of their breeding yet—they are only there last year.

3908. You have not seen their foals?—No.

3909. Anything you say is imaginary as to what their produce will be?—Only from like begetting like; their action is quite as good as Hackney action with much better shape.

Nov. 24, 1896.

Mr. John Dickson.

Mr. JOHN DICKSON, Coagh, County Tyrone, examined.

3910. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Tyrone?—Yes.

3911. And you farm land?—Yes.

3912. And breed horses?—Yes.

3913. What breed of horses have you been breeding?—We have bred from thoroughbreds and from Yorkshire horses.

3914. You mean what they call a Cleveland Bay or Yorkshire coaching horse?—Yorkshire coaching horses.

3915. You keep stallions?—Yes, sir

3916. What sort of stallions?—A Yorkshire coaching horse at the present time.

3917. How long have you had him?—Two seasons.

3918. You got foals by him?—His foals are six or seven months old now.

3919. How do you like them?—They look uncommonly well; good fine size and strength and nice appearance, made like thoroughbreds but stronger.

3920. Is this horse of yours in the Yorkshire Coaching Horse Stud Book?—Yes, I have a certificate to that effect.

3921. Do the farmers breed hunters in your district at all?—As a rule not, they have not mares to breed hunters.

3922. Do they try to breed carriage horses?—They have been breeding different horses; the mares as a rule are light and wanting in height and bone, and they have bred different horses—not worth much money.

3923. Do they breed a good many troopers?—A good many.

3924. Bought in the fairs?—Latterly they have not been paying; they used to get £35 and £40 for a trooping horse; now he is not worth more than £15 or £18, the same horse.

3925. Is that because the horses have deteriorated or that the prices have gone down?—In my opinion the horses have deteriorated.

3926. What do you attribute that to?—Latterly the farmers have bred a good deal from a couple of thoroughbreds in the neighbourhood that have brought a great many light horses and mares. One was "The Knight," and that horse "Cashel," the last witness spoke of. With the mares of the district they brought light stock.

3927. The mares themselves—do you think they have deteriorated?—I believe they have.

3928. That you also attribute to the use of improper sires?—Yes, that would be the proper answer.

3929. Have they been long in the habit of breeding from thoroughbred sires?—There have been thoroughbred sires in the country for the last twenty years; some were good when farmers had suitable mares able to breed horses with size and bone, but on the average they were not fit to breed from thoroughbreds; as a consequence the foals were not very good.

3930. How would you suggest improving the mares?—I think there should be local shows organized under the control or supervision of the Royal Dublin Society, and that the farmers should get prizes for foals of two, three, or four years old, or foals even, and that they would get out at five and leave room for others to come in. I think that would help to get farmers to keep their best fillies.

3931. As a rule now they sell their best foals?—As a rule they do.

3932. Is there a good class of stallions at present in your district?—Just now the most favourable is a horse—a Yorkshire horse that came over about the middle of the season last year from England, owned by Mr. George, and the horse I own myself.

3933. What is Mr. George's horse?—A Yorkshire coaching horse.

3934. The same breed as your own?—I believe so, but I have not seen him.

3935. They are popular horses with the farmers?—I can say that from experience from the horse's services last year, that they are very fond of him.

3936. Your horse has got plenty of mares?—Yes, he has.

3937. How many?—He served 108 mares this season. I don't know whether that is much or little.

3938. You spoke of these two horses, yours and Mr. George's, as being the most popular. I suppose that is not a sufficient number for the requirements of the farmers?—There are a great many other horses of no particular breed; there is no Hackney in our district; there is a thoroughbred horse at some distance.

3939. There appear to be only two thoroughbreds registered in the county at present. I suppose there are some other horses come in from neighbouring counties?—Yes, there are.

3940. Do you think if there were more thoroughbreds the farmers would use them?—They would want to be very heavy and strong, and at the present time amongst the mares in the district in which I live I don't know a mare fit to be put to a thoroughbred to bring a good horse—a hunting horse or carriage horse of any good.

3941. Do you think that a mare would be more likely to breed a useful horse by a Yorkshire coaching horse than by a thoroughbred?—Well, all I can say is that it was not until after mature consideration with a gentleman of long experience named Mr. Eken, that we bought this coaching horse for the sake of benefiting the county as well as ourselves.

3942. Have you any suggestions to make with a view of improving the mares in your district?—I think what I spoke of about the local shows, that, with a little time and a better class of horses, is likely to improve the breeding.

3943. Getting a better class stallion?—Yes.

3944. And you consider a Yorkshire coaching horse would be best?—He is a very fine looking horse, he is big with big flat short legs without hair, a good back and nice quarters and long arching neck; altogether a lovely horse, and should get very good horses.

3945. Would you prefer him to a thoroughbred of the same power, suppose you could get him—the same measurements?—I have not a word to say against a thoroughbred of the same power, but it is hard to get him.

3946. Have you any experience of Hackney stallions?—I have seen some in my time, and have seen foals of them, but they have not grown out well. They are more of a mountain horse. A horse that might answer a mountainy district very well. I never knew of any high prices being given for them.

3947. Do many of the farmers sell their stock as foals?—The small farmers do: they are not able to keep them until they come of age.

3948. Do American horses come about you?—Just a little, they come as far as Belfast, and they scatter out a little through the country.

3949. Do you approve of the suggestion made by other witnesses that they should be branded?—I believe they are doing harm to the sale of horses in Ireland; they are no good; they go to pieces sooner; they would not do to start breeding from as mares from what I have seen of them.

3950. What sort of horses are generally bred in your district?—Generally harness horses, single and double.

3951 Are they improving in price?—Prices have been worse for the last three or four years.

3952. Do you think it pays the ordinary small farmer to breed a second class harness horse at all?—If they start to work them as two-year-olds I think

it pays them: to get £30 for a four-year-old is better than buying a £10 horse and selling him for nothing after three or four years.

3953. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Your horse that you have introduced into the country and this other Yorkshire coaching horse, is it with a view to breeding harness horses or agricultural horses or what?—I think they have strength enough to be used for agricultural purposes, and they have shape to make either harness or saddle horses, and according to the mares that they get they may breed either.

3954. Do you think that the mares round about you—I am not speaking of your own mares now—are large enough to breed first class harness horses?—In my opinion they are, the average of mares may be said to be 15 hands, or may be 15½.

3955. They are fairly strong mares?—No, the general run of them are light; they are generally bred from these thoroughbreds that I have spoken of—the "Knight" and "Cashel"—and are generally light. All the foals I have seen from the coach horse have bone enough, and growth by appearance to go into anything.

3956. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Did you say, Mr. Dickson, there were a sufficient number of good sires with you or not?—I don't think I answered that question. I think there are not a sufficient number of good sires in our part of the country.

3957. And have you formed any opinion as to the sort that would be most suitable?—It may look a little partial my talking about this Yorkshire coaching horse, but as I said it was not until after the most mature consideration that he was bought and brought over. I don't know how his produce may turn out, but they are looking well, and he looks well enough himself, and I cannot advocate any other horse.

3958. This horse was bought by a number of gentlemen?—Two other gentlemen and myself.

3959. Of course you exercised your own opinion in arriving at the conclusion as to what would be most suitable?—Of course I had a voice in the matter, but these two men were of more matured knowledge than I was.

3960. Do you think it would be advisable if the question of importing new sires to Ireland arises to allow the different localities to agree amongst themselves what sire would be best?—I think it would be best that the different localities should have the horse that would suit them best. I don't think every man in a locality is capable of giving a proper opinion, but there are men in every locality that can form an opinion as to the proper horse.

3961. You think by consulting localities you could arrive at a decision as to what would be the most suitable horse?—That is my opinion.

3962. Mr. CAREW.—You said there was no Hackney in the district?—Not just now.

3963. Was there ever any?—"Performer," that was spoken about by the Rev. Mr. Irwin.

3964. How was he bred?—I don't know, he came from Yorkshire and only served three or four years.

3965. When?—I expect he is dead two years.

3966. But he was serving then until he died?—Yes, until he died.

3967. And he has not been replaced by any other Hackney?—No.

3968. What sort was his progeny?—Very variable horses, he bred horses of different type and colour, and I am certain that he never grew a horse to be worth more than £40.

3969. That is at full age?—Yes, at full age.

3970. The experience of Performer's stock has not induced any other breeder to import a Hackney?—No. They are not fond of them in my district.

3971. Col. St. QUINTIN.—Do the small farmers around you breed for sale or for their own purposes?—A good many of them sell as year olds and two-year olds; a good many sell their young stock at an early age.

3972. Do you think their idea is to utilise them or do they breed as an industry for sale?—They breed as an industry for sale, I think.

3973. You say the price of these smaller harness horses has gone down very much?—Yes.

3974. Can you account for that?—There are different reasons given; some say that owing to the introduction of bicycles so many horses are not required, and others say that the American horses have supplied the places of the Irish horses; no doubt both have contributed.

3975. What do you say has brought it down?—The use of bicycles, the importation of American horses, and the lack of quality in what is being bred.

3976. Supposing there is a still further decrease owing say to the introduction of motor cars and the use of bicycles and the importation of American horses, would it pay the farmer to breed, or would he breed only for his own purposes?—Only for his own purposes if things go on like this.

3977. Mr. WRENCH.—Where did you buy your coaching horse?—From a gentleman called F. H. Steriker, of Pickering, Yorkshire.

3978. Then I think you said your experience of Hackneys was confined to a Hackney called "Performer"?—Yes.

3979. Who did he belong to?—Mr. Gabriel George.

3980. What was he?—A farmer.

3981. A rich man?—Well, he is in good circumstances; he owns a good sized farm.

3982. You don't know how that horse was bred?—No, I could not say; I don't know anything about his pedigree.

3983. In the questions that were sent out to you by the Commission, in answer to the question "What are the most popular stallions in your district"?—You say—Two gets by "The Bounding Willow" and Yorkshire coaching stallion?—One of those gets is very old, he was a popular stallion in his day.

3984. What is he?—His mother was got by "Blarney," the property of the late Lord Charlemont. He is by a horse called "Bounding Willow."

3985. And he has been a very popular stallion?—Yes.

3986. He served for a good many seasons?—Yes, but not exactly in my district.

3987. What were his stock like?—Generally good, but under-sized.

3988. "Bounding Willow" was a Hackney stallion?—Yes, with a good touch of Arab in him. He may have been entered in the Hackney Stud Book.

3989. Then I think you said the average of the height of mares in your district was about 15 hands?—Yes, about 15 hands; a good many are under 15—14.2 and 14½. I should say 15 hands is the average.

3990. Would not the cross of a Yorkshire coaching horse on these 14.2 mares be rather a violent cross, an extreme cross?—I don't know that it has any tendency to do any harm.

3991. What height is your horse?—16.1½.

3992. It would be rather extreme?—They would be two extremes.

3993. Is it your opinion that the best results are obtained by using an extreme cross like that?—When you get the mare 14½, that is under the average.

3994. The average you say is 15?—The average.

3995. I am not talking of the big mares, I am talking of the small. Would you not think it an extreme cross for them?—I have seen many small mares breed very nice horses of a good size.

3996. You have no experience of his stock yet?—Nothing more than coming year-old foals.

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Colonel SPAIGHT, Derry Castle, Killaloe, examined.

Col. Spaight

3997. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Clare?—In the county of Tipperary, but my post-town is in Clare.

3998. You have had considerable experience of horse-breeding?—I have had I suppose about five and thirty years experience about the breeding of horses, and my brother, I was with him for a long time; he took a great interest in it.

3998A. What sort of horses do you breed?—Hunters and carriage horses entirely.

3999. Do you breed them in the same way?—I tried to breed in the same way as my elder brother; I have had a long experience of it at home and abroad, and I tried to breed horses out of really good mares; I think that sells; up in my county farmers seem to think they can breed out of anything, and make a great mistake in doing so.

4000. You say you breed hunters and harness horses; do you use the same stallions?—I would; I use thoroughbred stallions under all circumstances, but I think the great mistake that people make is thinking that any mare is good enough to breed from, and I think if any encouragement could be given to farmers to keep their better class mares it would be a good thing; they sell now the better class ones, and think anything is good enough to breed from. I think if they could be induced to keep the better class of mare, and that some premium could be given to them that they would do it—a very little would make them do it. I would suggest giving something to them to keep the better class mares. They are tempted by a small sum and sell them, and think anything good enough to breed from. If there were some small premium or prize in districts divided into baronies—giving a small thing, say ten premiums in each barony of £5 a piece for those presenting the best mare and foal. I think you would induce them to keep the good ones and help in a great measure the breeding of a better class horse.

4001. You would give premiums to young mares?—I have bred from two year old mares and found them answer extremely well. I think if farmers were to breed from two-year-olds before they become saleable and useful they would be able to make something of them. I have done it myself, and have got a couple of foals before the mares became five years, and made something of them.

4002. But the farmers often do it?—Not in my part of the country; I do it myself, but I don't think it is done as a general rule, but whatever they see pay they take to it.

4003. Are there some good stallions in your district?—Yes, in Limerick there are some good stallions, but not very many.

4004. Do you approve of half-breds?—I don't believe in them at all. I believe solely in breeding from the best blood you can get, and I don't think people are half careful enough about taking precautions against hereditary disease. I have known one man in my part of the world who gave a large sum for a horse, and nearly every horse he got was a roarer, because it was in his blood—hereditary.

4005. Do you think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has been a success in your district?—Well, I do. I think they have done very well; inspectors come down and register, I think, the best in the district, but it does not always follow that they are really good.

4006. And as regards giving premiums to mares, that ought to be extended?—I don't think anything would do so much to improve the breed of horses as giving the farmers some encouragement to keep their best fillies.

4007. That is done under the present scheme; they give prizes to mares belonging to farmers under a certain valuation—£150?—But they have to send them to the shows.

4008. CHAIRMAN.—Oh, yes, they have to be selected?—I think that if some quiet encouragement could be given by letting the inspectors come down, and if some inducements could be held out to the farmer to hold on to his best filly instead of selling the best and keeping the worst, as he does now, it would do more than anything to improve the breed of horses. As long as you have no good mares you will have no good foals.

4009. Do you think the horses in your district have improved or deteriorated?—I do not think they have; I think that when gentlemen kept a good stallion in the old days they did do better.

4010. You think they have deteriorated then?—I won't say that; I think we are at a standstill.

4011. Are prices as good for young stock?—I don't think so; if you get a really good animal you will always get a good price for it. I keep a pack of harriers with the object of improving the horses about me, and I think we are just about where we were—not much better. I have only done it for two years.

4012. At what age do the farmers sell their horses there?—They generally sell them at about one and a half years.

4013. The smaller farmers?—The better ones keep them on.

4014. And sell them as three and four-year-olds?—As four-year-olds; they work them at one and a half years very constantly at light farm work

4015. Are these horses chiefly got by thoroughbred horses?—Yes, got by thoroughbreds. A great many are got by very inferior horses indeed; that, perhaps, does as much injury as anything. The horse travelling about serves mares at a small price, and the little money makes a great difference to a great many farmers; they get them served by any kind of horse rather than pay for it. If you could get good stallions, and farmers can be induced to patronize them by cheapening the service of the mare, I think it would be of very great use.

4016. You think the farmers consider the price more than the suitability?—I do.

4017. Do the farmers take good care of their brood mares and young horses?—They do; they house them in winter. If they get hold of a good horse they know how to take care of it. The first expense is what they consider most. A good horse standing at £3, £4, or £5, they won't go in for it; and if these mares were given prizes in the different districts—prizes to the man who presents the best foal and mare in his district; and if he got the service of a stallion at a cheaper rate, say half rate or so, that would induce more than anything the creating of a good breed of horses.

4018. Have you any experience of breeding Hackneys?—No; I saw them when I went about a good deal as a Local Government Board Inspector in the North of Ireland, but I didn't breed them at all.

4019. You don't consider them suitable for the mares in your part of the country?—There are none in my part of the country, but I don't believe in their being generally useful; they are good for show purposes and harness and light work, but they would not answer in my country.

4020. Do you think if they were introduced into your county they would affect the value of the hunters?—I cannot say, because I have had no experience of that myself.

4021. Do many droves of horses from the west come into your district?—Oh, no, not now; some years ago they used to, but not now.

4022. I think you said at the beginning that you had experience of breeding horses in foreign countries?—Yes, a little. I have been a few years abroad, and both rode and used them out there, but then we generally went in for Barbs.

4023. In India?—The Ionan Islands.

4024. You used Barb stallions?—Yes.

4025. Was the mare of any particular breed?—They brought two Barb stallions and bred from the mares of the country, a very useful class of horses. We used them for riding purposes principally. We had no hunting, and used them for paper chasing.

4026. Were they small horses?—Well, about 15 to 15.2.

4027. What class of horses do you suggest would be best for the farmers in your district to breed?—I think that if they were encouraged to keep the best mares, the best fillies, good roomy, muscular, suitable fillies to breed from, it would be of immense advantage, and I would breed from nothing but thoroughbreds. My brother William had a longer experience than I, and he went to any amount of trouble to get the best weight-carrying horses and crossed them with mares. He didn't always do it with a thoroughbred, good half-bred or three-quarter bred mares, but his main object was to get weight-carrying hunters and first class carriage horses.

4028. You bred them both the same way—if you didn't get a first-class hunter you hoped to get a first-class carriage horse?—I did; those are the horses that pay best in my country, it may differ further north, but in the west I had some little experience and it is different, but in my own country nothing pays like good horses, the better you breed the better they pay.

4029. I understand you suggest that the farmers should get good sires at low fees, and also premiums to induce them to keep suitable mares?—They feel paying out so much money, and they would go any distance to a really good sire if they could be made to feel that they could do it for less money.

4030. Is there any other suggestion that you would like to make?—I would certainly, if possible, stop the wretched class of stallions that travel about the country and which serve mares some times at an incalculably small fee; they go down to 7*s.* and 3*s.*

4031. Mr. WRENCH.—And sometimes a glass of whiskey?—Yes, it leads to a very bad horse.

4032. CHAIRMAN.—Would you approve of the idea of licensing stallions, making the sound stallions pass a Government examination?—Oh, certainly; there could be nothing in the world more detrimental than allowing stallions physically unsound to cover mares about the country. I think that and the choosing of mares are the two things that would tend most to improve the breed of horses in the country. I would not allow a stallion to serve at all without being registered and proved entirely fit as to hereditary disease.

4033. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You don't keep a stallion of your own?—I do not.

4034. Is your district a horse-breeding district?—Yes. I think there is a good deal of horse breeding, and a great many good horses bred in the district.

4035. You think it is capable of breeding first class horses?—Yes, I think we are capable of breeding as good a horse as you can get anywhere; my brother bred "Chimney Sweep." He was particularly fond of stayers and weight carriers.

4036. As to the present blood in Ireland—do you think the Irish blood as it now stands is the best blood for breeding general purpose animals?—I think for general purposes there is no horse in the world can beat an Irish horse.

4037. You are speaking of the blood?—Yes. Then from that I presume you would be rather averse to any radical change?—There is something in the Irish blood that seems to me to fence readier and easier, and take to it more kindly than any other horse in the world.

4038. You should not like to see any mixture of blood in your country, such as the Hackney or Cleveland?—I think the English stallion is not objectionable, but I do not approve of old racing stallions or mares being bred from; I think you should breed from the young and fresh; I think the feeding and training of old racing mares renders them unfit to breed from. I don't approve of them at all.

4039. Then if you are unable to get the number of thoroughbred stallions of good make and shape and bone would you be against half-breds? Should you be opposed to half-breds in the country?—I would, and I am not only speaking my own opinion, but that of men of experience in the country. I would never breed from anything but a thoroughbred; the best blood I could get in the country, and then get the strength and bone in the mare.

4030. Mr. WRENCH. The soil in your district is different from the soil in some parts of the west?—Oh, yes.

4031. You have some of the best limestone land?—We have very good land.

4032. And can raise a very different sort of horse?—The Hackney might do in some parts of the West of Ireland. I was acting as Local Government Inspector for some years up there during the famine, and I saw a good deal of them; that country will carry a class of horses that is totally unfit for my county. I think in all the South of Ireland you can breed a much superior class of horse.

Mr. JAMES MACCLANCY, Miltown Malbay, examined.

4033. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the west of Clare, I think?—Yes, sir.

4034. Do you farm lands?—I do.

4035. And have you some experience in horse-breeding?—Well, I bred horses for the last fifteen or seventeen years.

4036. Would you describe to us the breed of horses that you tried to produce?—I bred from the common mare with the thoroughbred, the best thoroughbred in my district.

4037. You think that the thoroughbred horse is the most suitable horse?—Yes; I think so. In my district, sir, in the west of Clare, the holdings are very small, and they cannot afford to keep good mares, they sell their best fillies and mares.

4038. At what age do they generally sell the horses, the farmers in your district?—The larger class of farmers keep them to three and four-year-olds, and the smaller class one and a-half year-olds to two-year-olds.

4039. Do you think your district is a good horse producing district?—Very much so, it is famous for breeding young cattle of every kind.

4040. And what class of horses do you think could be produced that would be most likely to be remunerative?—I would say the larger class of farmers would produce a hunter or good harness horse.

4041. Are they useful mares, the ordinary run of mares?—The larger class generally keep a useful mare, but the smaller class cannot afford to do so, they are very weedy and defective, very light.

4042. Do the farmers take any trouble about mating their mares as a rule?—Latterly they seem more interested in the breeding of horses than formerly, they were rather indifferent, latterly they are rather more inclined to take more trouble.

4043. What class of stallion do they like?—Generally thoroughbred, they are most popular and more useful I think.

4044. Are there plenty of suitable stallions in the

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country ?—Rather too much stallions, but of a very indifferent quality, I think.

4045. Do you think they could be improved ?—Very much so.

4046. What would you suggest in that direction, how would you suggest the improvement should come ?—I would recommend for the larger class of farmers a good thoroughbred with plenty of substance and bone, and for the smaller class a half-bred or Hackney stallion I think would do very well.

4047. Have you had any personal experience of breeding from a Hackney stallion ?—Not myself, but there is a Hackney in my neighbourhood, and he seems popular enough with some of the farmers.

4048. Have you seen his stock ?—Yes, I have seen some of his progeny.

4049. Do you consider that they are good useful horses ?—They are useful for the farmers for their own work, and they can sell them earlier than they would the produce of the thoroughbred animal, they develop earlier, and become more useful.

4050. Do the farmers in your district breed principally for the purpose of sale or for their own use ?—Well, some of them have bred for sale and some for their own use.

4051. Are there many horses sold out of your district annually ?—A great many, every farmer there seems to have a horse, and they generally keep a mare, and whether it is good or bad they breed from the mare and get a foal from her.

4052. What age do they generally sell them at ?—The small farmers sell at half a year old and from that to a year and a-half, and the larger class keep them to three or four years old.

4053. Have you any experience of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme working in your district ?—I have. I believe the people have a greater interest in the breeding of horses since it was introduced, but so far as the Royal Dublin Society in Dublin works I think we are placed at a great disadvantage in the west of Clare, it is so very remote and expensive to take horses from here to the shows; very often I knew a farmer to have a good horse and he is deterred from undergoing the expense lest he might not sell him to advantage.

4054. You mean as regards the Show ?—Yes. I think the scheme is working very well.

4055. But as regards the horse-breeding scheme ?—It is working successfully; but it might be more localised, it would be a benefit if we had more shows and prizes given to the farmers to keep their good mares and fillies, for really no matter what sire we have we could not produce good horses from the mares we have there.

4056. But still the scheme is in operation in your district ?—So it is.

4057 And the mares are shown and prizes given to mares that are considered most suitable ?—Yes.

4058. There is a local committee I conclude there ?—Yes.

4059. And those mares are brought to certain places and judged and prizes given accordingly ?—Yes.

4060. Do you think that works satisfactorily ?—I think so, but it might be improved if we had more of them; it is rather remote for parts of the country, it is generally held in Ennis, and that is very far away from the west of Clare.

4061. Do they sell many troopers in your district ?—They do, they are quite satisfied with their young horses if they grow up to be troopers.

4062. It pays them to breed a trooper ?—Yes, but I am sorry to say very few would sell as troopers, they are not class enough or height enough.

4063. How are the troopers bred ?—Generally from the mares we have and half-bred sires; all the horses in my neighbourhoood are half-breds, the thoroughbreds that we have had there are some twenty-five miles from where I live, and further from other districts in Clare.

4064. There are some few thoroughbred horses in your immediate vicinity ?—The nearest is about twenty-five miles, Major Studdert's.

4065. Do the farmers take good care of their mares and young stock ?—I think they take greater care now than heretofore, they are more interested, and they are becoming more intelligent I think in that respect.

4066. Do you keep a stallion yourself ?—No.

4067. What stallion do you think is most suitable for the mares in your neighbourhood ?—I think for the larger farmers the thoroughbred with plenty of bone and substance would be the best.

4068. A good thoroughbred ?—A good thoroughbred, and for the smaller I would say a half-bred or Hackney would do very well. I would rather myself breed from the thoroughbred.

4069. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood would have any effect on the sale of hunters from your part of the country ?—I cannot speak from experience, but from what I have heard I believe it would, there is a prejudice against it, and people who seem to know better than I do say they have not spirit enough or stamina as well as our Irish bred or thoroughbred, which I believe.

4070. You think that the present Irish breed of horses is good ?—I think so, much better than the Hackney breed.

4071. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Which would you prefer to breed from in your district, the half-bred, and when I say the half-bred I mean a wellbred thoroughbred cross, what I think is usually understood as a half-bred, a good half-bred or a good Hackney ?—I think that a good half-bred would be better, I would prefer a good half-bred at any rate to a Hackney.

4072. You think that they would be obtainable if there was a demand for them ?—I think so.

4073. Then we understand you prefer that for the mares in your district to the Hackney or to any other breed like that ?—Some of the people in my district are attached to the Hackney, they say that he develops earlier and is very easily handled.

4074. Still you yourself would prefer a good well-bred half-bred to any other after the thoroughbred ?—I would, but the great thing in our district is to improve the breed of mares, I would say the sires are good enough in a way but the mares are very defective.

4075. Can you make any suggestion for improving the mares ?—If you had prizes given to the farmers to keep the best fillies and mares I would say it would be a great thing, and then shows in the localities. You could have a show in each barony and a few prizes for the best mares, they are much interested and very anxious to keep them, but they are so poor they would sell anything they have to try and make ends meet.

4076. Local shows you mean, prizes at local shows for mares who have bred foals ?—Yes, for the owners or who might have young foals that they would keep to breed, to encourage them to keep them because all their best fillies are now bought by foreigners, and anything they have in the shape of a good horse or good young beast of any kind they sell them to make the money and make ends meet, they want some encouragement to keep them; the best sires in the world would not produce a good foal from the mares they have at present.

4077. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Are there many of these fillies bought by foreigners ?—All the most likely fillies are bought by foreigners; as a matter of fact when a man has a good filly he is bound to sell her through poverty.

4078. I suppose they buy them at any cost ?—They buy them at any cost.

4079. Did you notice a suggestion made by some witnesses before this Commission that the old mares used by the Army Service Corps and the Artillery, when their work was done and they were no longer fit for use, should be distributed among the farmers

in Ireland as brood mares?—I would not approve of it.

4080. Why not?—I would rather breed from younger mares.

4081. You believe in breeding from young mares?—I do.

4082. Mr. CAREW.—Would you breed from a two-year-old?—Yes, I have bred myself from a two-year-old.

4083. And found it successful?—And found it successful.

4084. Then the purport of your evidence is that for high-class, with a good mare, you would breed from a thoroughbred?—Entirely.

4085. And you prefer a good half-bred sire to a Hackney?—I do, I think the Hackney might do fairly well, and some of the people like Hackneys, they mature earlier and are saleable at a year or a year and a half old.

4086. Are they good workers on the farm?—They are good workers on the farm, very docile and easily trained.

4087. You suggest that local shows should be held for the purpose of improving the breed?—Yes, it would be a great improvement.

4088. And if the breed of mares was improved you would have all that was desired as far as sires are concerned, you have good enough sires in the district if you have good mares?—I think so, the want of good mares is a great thing, but we want sires badly.

4089. You would be in favour of registering every sire?—Every sound sire.

4090. If you register him he must be sound?—I would prohibit, if I could, every unsound sire and mare from breeding at all, because it is a dead loss to the country so far as hereditary disease.

4091. Mr. WRENCH.—You would be in favour of registering every kind of sire?—Only the sound sires.

4092. You would not mind what breed it was provided it was sound?—Provided it was sound.

4093. You talked of the larger and smaller class of farmers, what do you call the larger class of farmers, I mean up to what valuation about?—I would say from £50 upwards; I would say he would be of the high-class of farmers.

4094. You would draw the line at £50?—At £50.

4095. You would call those above £50 the larger?—Yes, or you might let it down to £30; any person with £30 valuation is nearly able to mind himself; they are rather independent.

4096. Are there many farmers in your district below £30 who breed horses?—Oh, most of them; say from £10 to £30 breed horses, most of them; they would keep a horse and they generally keep a mare, and say they will have a foal out of her, no matter how she might be as to shape, soundness, or quality.

4097. Then any suggestions as to preventing these men from breeding would not be practicable?—Unless they would be unsound I would not prevent them breeding.

4098. Provided they had sound mares you would say these men ought to be allowed to breed?—I think it is a dead loss to them the way they are breeding at present; they are breeding from very bad classes.

4099. And unsound classes?—I daresay they are, but they are breeding them anyway.

4100. What fairs in your district do they generally sell their horses at?—Ennis fair; Spancil-hill is a great fair in our country; we have several horse fairs in Ennis; we have a Miltown fair and Mullagh fair.

4101. Do you find horses with good action sell well?—Oh, very well; if they have good action they are bound to sell well; they must be shapely too.

4102. Can you say from your own experience whether Hackney horses get horses with better action than half-bred horses?—No.

4103. You have not much personal experience of Hackneys?—No.

4104. Therefore, though you have a preference for a half-bred sire, you have never bred from a Hackney stallion yourself?—Never.

4105. Have you ever bred from a half-bred sire?—Never.

4106. You have only bred from a thoroughbred?—Yes.

4107. And I gather from your evidence that you think it would be better if more prizes were given to local shows?—I think so, to improve the breed of mares.

4108. Do you mean shows got up by local committees?—Well, yes, in connection with the Dublin Show, and horses generally.

4109. And the Royal Dublin Society's Committee, do you know how that is appointed at present?—I do; I know the members.

4110. Do you know how it is appointed?—No; but I think there could be no fault to be found with the members at present in my district; but it is rather far from some parts of the county for the people to attend with their mares; they have to go to Ennis.

4111. Is Ennis the only place?—Ennis is the only place in my county that I am aware of.

4112. And you think that the smaller class of farmers, the farmers under £30, require more help than the larger class?—I think the larger class of farmers are able to help themselves, but the smaller class require help.

4113. CHAIRMAN.—Any other suggestions that you would like to make to the Commission, Mr. M'Clancy?—Well, I don't know, sir, except we feel that we don't benefit much from the Royal Dublin Society's Shows in Dublin; we are too remote and terribly handicapped in the west of Ireland, with railway fares and our expenses; if they could be subsidised in some way by the Government it would benefit us; we are terribly handicapped compared with places nearer Dublin. I attended the Dublin Show with horses with a friend of mine. If you don't sell well they are sacrificed altogether, it hardly paid expenses to come there, and, as a matter of fact, I need hardly tell you he would not come there again, nor would I unless I was sure of selling my horse well.

4114. Mr. CAREW.—What do the railway companies charge from Miltown?—I could not tell you, but it is rather heavy, and you have to remain in Dublin for a week with your man and horse; it would cost the price of the horse altogether if you don't sell well.

4115. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Do you find the railway rates have an injurious effect on the trade?—Oh, certainly; if you have not a good horse and cannot sell well, you won't try it again; there are plenty of people who could not afford to run the risk of coming up.

4116. Do you think the trade could be developed if the railway rates were not so high?—No doubt about it; people would be anxious to improve their breed of horses, and would come here to get a good market for them if they could do it with less risk.

4117. They cannot do it now?—They won't do it now; from the experience of a few of us we would not think of doing it.

Mr. HARRY M'DONNELL, Letterfrack, examined.

4118. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county Galway?—Yes, sir.

4119. You are a land agent and farm land there?—Yes, sir.

4120. You are well acquainted with a considerable portion of the county?—With the Connemara portion of Galway.

4121. And you think the soil is suitable for horse-breeding?—I do, sir.

4122. Do many farmers breed horses?—Nearly everyone keeps a mare, nearly all the small farmers.

4123. What class of mares?—From 14 or 14·2 hands, the Connemara pony.

4124. What sort of stallion do you think is most

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suited for that class of mare?—I should say a Welsh cob would suit the country very well.

4125. You don't think that country is suitable for breeding big horses?—I think the fairly well-to-do people could.

4126. I conclude the majority of people there are not well-to-do?—No, sir, they are not.

4127. But the reverse of well-to-do?—Yes, but they must always keep a horse and they generally keep a working mare with a view to having a foal each year.

4128. Do they sell them early?—Sell them at six months old, they are taken in droves to the inland counties, Kildare, Meath and Roscommon.

4129. How do they sell them?—They sell them at six months old and get very bad prices; at Westport the 1st November I saw them sold at from thirty shillings to £2 10*s*.

4130. What were those fillies got by?—They must be got by some of the local horses there.

4131. One man I suppose buys a lot of them?—Yes, different people come down there to buy them, take them away in droves.

4132. Straight from the dams?—Yes, sir.

4133. The foals and dams come into the fair together?—Yes, and the foal is taken away, generally railed to Athlone, and started to walk from there, some come to Roscommon, they walk them through the country and sell them whenever they get buyers.

4134. The Congested District Board's stallions I suppose cover in that district?—We have them in Connemara.

4135. Has that affected the breeding of horses?—Yes, I think, they have done some good in the way of Welsh cobs, but I don't think the Hackney—he is condemned by the outer public altogether, they won't touch him, they say when they come to Connemara they only want to get a pony, they don't want to buy a horse.

4136. Do you think the Welsh cob is better than the Barb?—I really think it is, it is hardier; Mr. Henry had a Barb, it did not fit the country, it was too leggy, no body about it; we had a very good sire there from the Royal Dublin Society, at Clifden, "Watchspring."

4137. A thoroughbred?—Yes, he bred some very good ones.

4138. Did his produce fetch good prices?—They have not been sold yet, but there are a good many inquiries about them.

4139. Are there any foals by "Watchspring"?—Oh, there are, but I have not heard of them being sold, the well-to-do generally went to "Watchspring" and they keep them, they are about four-year-old now.

4140. His fee was higher I conclude?—Yes, it was, it was I think £1 1*s*. for over £20 valuation, the Congested Districts Board is five shillings. But really if everyone is allowed to have a sire in that country it will ruin the breed of horses altogether, they don't mind whether they are well bred or not, for the country people generally get the same price for the foal.

4141. I conclude that the smaller farmers very seldom patronised "Watchspring"?—I don't think they did then.

4142. The fee was £1?—I am not quite sure; I think it was £1, but I know he was a very good sire. I have some of his gets myself, and they are very good.

4143. I see in your answers to queries you advocate a Suffolk Punch?—Well, yes.

4144. Would he not be too big to get ponies?—He is generally about 14.2 or so.

4145. I though a Suffolk Punch was a much bigger horse?—Something about 14.2.

4146. Mr. Wrench.—On an average it would be at least 16 hands?—Well, something to get something about 14.2, that is what we want, because they don't want to get a horse in our country at all; they only want to get a pony.

4147. Chairman.—They can always sell their foals, I suppose?—They would sell them at some price—always can.

4148. At these fairs?—At Clifden and Westport; those are the general fairs.

4149. Do you think it pays a small farmer to breed a foal each year?—They must have a mare; no matter what they get for a foal, it is a small profit.

4150. The fee is so very small, the service fee?—Yes.

4151. Are there any half-bred sires in your district?—Well, I knew of one half-bred sire, and we had some very good harness horses from him; he was a horse called "Tearaway"; he was a half-bred.

4152. How was he bred?—I could not say, but he came from the county Meath.

4153. How big was he?—15.3 or so, but we had some very good harness horses from him.

4154. Do you mean crossed with the ponies?—Yes.

4155. Have you anything you would like to suggest?—Just about the sires; I think it would be a very good thing that every one having a sire should take out a licence, that licence to be given by somebody that understood the class of horse or pony that suited the place, and anyone that had a sire not licensed to have him heavily fined. This would secure sound sires.

4156. But it would hardly pay a man to ribng a suitable sire down there to cover at 5*s*.?—Unless the Government did it, I don't see a prospect of anyone else doing it.

4157. The Government have a great advantage over any local enterprise?—Indeed they have.

4158. I suppose there are plenty of stallions there now of different sorts?—Oh, yes, but very bad.

4159. Do you think the ponies have deteriorated or improved?—I think they have gone back very much. We have not the old Connemara breed at all scarcely; they are a bit hardy, but weedy from inter-breeding.

4160. You think it is from inter-breeding?—I think it is from their own kind, I do, indeed.

4161. And the use of inferior sires that the horses have deteriorated?—Yes.

4162. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—You would, from what you know of these stallions, prefer a Welsh cob?—Yes, sir.

4163. Have you any experience of them; are there any of them down there?—I think I saw one of them there with the Congested Districts Board, a horse called "Sunbeam."

4164. Is that a Welsh cob?—I think he was. I know his gets have done very well; the climate agrees with them very much.

4165. But if you could get a horse like "Watchspring"?—I really think he fits all, the poor and well-to-do people.

4166. And if you could get him at the same price that you get some of these other stallions, a Welsh cob or Hackney, we will say for 5*s*., which would you prefer?—I would rather have "Watchspring."

4167. That is an animal of the Watchspring class?—Yes.

4168. A week or two ago we had some evidence given that I think thirty years ago or more there were a number of Arabs and Barbs brought over into that country, and that they greatly improved the breed of Connemara ponies?—I don't think they improved it, sir.

4169. By a Colonel Martin, I think?—Yes, sir.

4170. That they did a great deal of good?—I could not say anything about those, but I know an Arab that came over there did not do very much good.

4171. You mean the Arabs lately?—Yes; Mr. Henry had one there at Kylemore, he was too leggy altogether for the country.

4172. But if you could get a suitable short-legged Arab or Barb, should you think that as far as blood is

concerned that that would be a good cross to introduce to rehabilitate the Connemara pony?—It may be, I think it would be, but really I would rather have the Watchspring class.

4173. By the Watchspring class you mean the English thoroughbred of suitable make and shape, and action, at a low price?—At a low price.

4174. Sir T. ESMONDE.—With regard to your suggestion of licensing the stallions, would you license every stallion?—The stallion should be brought before a committee, and then any stallion that was fit for it should get a licence, and the others should be cast away, and if such a stallion was not cut or castrated the owner should be fined.

4175. Would you have the stallions examined by a veterinary surgeon?—I should say so.

4176. Would you consider that necessary in your system of licensing?—Yes.

4177. They should be sound stallions, free from any hereditary disease?—No doubt.

4178. Mr. CAREW.—You have said a good horse like "Tearaway," was he half-bred?—He was.

4179. You have no idea of his breeding?—I have not, he was there seventeen or twenty years ago.

4180. But his produce were good?—Very good harness horses. I have driven one of them sixty miles in a day.

4181. Did you ever see him?—Oh, I remember seeing him.

4182. Was he a small horse?—No, big, 15.3, a big black horse.

4183. Mr. WRENCH.—Talking of Barbs do you know that one of the best Barb stallions in the United Kingdom has been standing in Connemara for the last two years?—"Awfully Jolly," so I heard.

4184. You have not been in Cashel when he was standing there?—I bought some of his foals.

4185. Were they big enough?—They appeared to be too light for the country. I paid £7 or £8 for the foals, and had to sell them going four years for £9.

4186. They did not grow big enough?—They had not body enough.

4187. Do you know that the people of Clifden were consulted about the horse they would have and they said on no account to send them a horse like "Watchspring."?—I did not hear that. I don't think they knew much about "Watchspring" until lately.

4188. I am speaking of two years ago?—I don't think they knew anything of "Watchspring" up to four years ago, and did not know how his foals would turn out.

4189. Has he not been in the country five years?—No, only four.

4190. Have you not seen any of his produce sold?—No, I have not.

4191. Do you know the horse himself?—I do, Mr. Berridge has bought him, he stands at Ballynahinch.

4192. Do you think he has bone enough for the mares of that country?—I think so.

4193. You say the outside public condemn the Hackney?—Altogether; they come into the country to buy a class of pony 14 or 14.3 hands, but the Hackney grows them bigger.

4194. Who are the outside public?—Different people who come in to buy cattle, and who often buy a few ponies.

4195. That is polo ponies?—Yes, sir.

4196. Then it is the people who come for polo ponies condemn the Hackney?—I really don't know what they use them for.

4197. The people themselves, the farmers that breed these ponies, what class of animal do they want?—The Welsh cob, about 14.2, they don't want them very big, they scarcely use a cart, it is all carried on the back.

4198. Can you say whether the produce of the Welsh cobs or the Hackney are the best?—I think the Welsh cob.

4199. And you have seen both?—I have seen both. I think the Welsh cob suits Connemara best, he is a short thick horse.

4200. You have never seen any Hackneys except that one?—No.

4201. And you have never bred from any yourself—I have two Hackneys, I bought as foals.

4202. CHAIRMAN.—Is there any further suggestion you would like to make?—I think not.

4203. You think the Welsh cob is the most suitable animal for your district, and you think the stallions should be licensed?—I think so. You could not improve the breed of horses in our country if everyone was allowed to have a stallion, because the country people will go to the cheapest.

Mr. SAMUEL JOHNSTON, J.P., examined.

4204. CHAIRMAN.—You are a magistrate living in the county Galway?—Yes, sir.

4205. Do you live in the west side of the county?—Nine miles west of Ballinasloe.

4206. Do they breed many horses in that part?—Yes, they are bred largely.

4207. Do you breed horses personally?—I do.

4208. What class do you breed?—I breed them for harness and good weight-carrying hunters. I approve of the thoroughbred horse, the best thoroughbred horse that can be got with good bone and substance, and proper shapes, and free from hereditary complaints, but I believe good half-bred horses are very useful for my district. What I mean by half-bred is the first cross of a thoroughbred horse and the good old Irish mare, which is very rare now, but is sometimes to be got if only looked out for properly.

4209. What is your definition of an old Irish mare?—A good old breed of Irish mare, short-legged, good shouldered mare, good slanting shoulders, proper action, in fact the animal it has been said is able to trot eight miles an hour under a car.

4210. How is she bred?—Well. There was an old breed in the county. I don't know exactly what it was, it is almost extinct now, unfortunately. You sometimes get a good hunter of the class, but invariably they were very good harness horses, and not too hairy about the legs, showing some kind of distant blood, I don't know where it came from, but they are an old class that is very well known, and it is off them the best weight-carrying hunters have been bred in my part of the country. She was, in fact, bred by a horse of her own class out of a mare of her own class?—There must be a distant cross in the mare of course of thoroughbred, she shows a lot of sweetness, a clean head, and all that sort of thing.

4211. You say you breed hunters and high-class carriage horses?—Yes.

4212. And to breed hunters you use a thoroughbred sire; what sire do you use to breed carriage horses?—Well, in breeding from a thoroughbred horse with a half-bred mare, of course you will sometimes get a hunter and sometimes get a carriage horse; for any that are not hunters, as a rule, are carriage horses, or they may be remounts for cavalry, but, as every breeder knows, for one really good one you get a great many bad or middling ones.

4213. What is the usual class of horse that is bred by the farmers in your part of Galway?—Indeed I may call it a very nondescript breed, the horses bred by the small class of farmers; they go to the cheapest animals they can get, which is often a distant cross of the Clydesdale or Suffolk Punch, or something of that kind, and they are a very bad lot. I have come from a large grazing district, and the large graziers and gentlemen who own land themselves try to keep the best blood they can, and generally keep them to three or four years old, and

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some people who train them keep them to five years old. I very often train them myself, and have them hunting, and try to put them to as much as I can.

4214. Then I conclude the large farmers generally use a good sire, and the small farmers only have regard to the fee, the small fee?—I am greatly afraid that the want of capital amongst the small farmers is the crying evil; they go to the cheap sire. Then, as a rule, those people sell them at a year and a half old and sometimes as foals. Some keep them to two years old, and then they get their little work out of them, which is of course very injurious to the horses. They begin to work them at one and a half years old, and ruin them by that, and they try to sell them as two and a half year olds, and some sell at three years old, but of course the large grazier who has large tracts let them run from three to four years old without ever touching them.

4215. What sort of mares do the farmers breed?—As a rule they are too small and weedy; we want something to increase the size. Indeed, we want more improvement in the mares than in the sires, as far as that goes.

4216. How would you suggest to improve the mares?—We have a very good local show in my locality, which has been worked up wonderfully by some of the local gentry. Lord Ashtown is at the head of it; he has done wonders for it at Ballinasloe, and there has been a good deal of good effected by helping those shows and giving good prizes for the good animals. But I would suggest going further, and it would be this, if possible, to induce the owners of these animals, in order to get prizes, to hold them on, to keep them on. Well, that is rather a difficult question, or at least a difficult matter, perhaps, to touch on, but I think that would be one way it could be done. It would be by giving them of course good prizes, and then, when the good sires are sent down by the Government or Royal Dublin Society, let them have the service of them gratis as an encouragement; take down their proper description at the time, have properly qualified veterinary surgeons to do it, and qualified men to take down the descriptions of the mares that would take those prizes, so that there could be no scheming or dodging about it, and be sure that the same mare would be kept; have a regular guarantee from the farmers that they would keep them for a certain number of years a certain time after getting this prize, and the facility of getting the service gratis, I think, would effect great good and induce the farmers to keep them.

4217. You think it is absolutely necessary to give additional facilities to farmers to induce them to send their mares to more expensive and suitable stallions?—I believe that would be a step in the right direction.

4218. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme working in your part of Galway?—Oh, yes, it has effected a great deal of good, and has given people more taste for getting the right horses and getting into the good breeds.

4219. Do you think the small prizes given to these mares of £5 and £10 has the result of inducing farmers to keep their mares?—I believe it has, and would have, if carried out further, as I suggested, if they keep on those mares and give a regular guarantee to keep them for a certain number of years, then to allow them to have the service gratis, I believe would be a step in the right direction.

4220. Are there plenty of suitable sires do you think in your part of Galway?—No, we have not many suitable sires in my locality, we have got what I consider one good thoroughbred horse belonging to Lord Ashtown, a very well known old horse called Terror, one of the best known horses in Galway, bred by one of the Blakes of Ballinafad, one of the old Ballinafad breed, got by Coward I think. There is another good horse about six miles from Woodlawn, on the other side, owned by Mr. Dolphin, a horse called Draco, that is a good thoroughbred horse, at least he is getting good ones, then I think that is about the end of them. On the other side of Ballinasloe there are a few good horses; there are a couple of good horses owned by Mr. Lambert; there is a good old horse also of the Blake breeding, Ballinafad, I think that is one of the best thoroughbred horses in Ireland, one of the best boned thoroughbred horses I ever saw, he is an old horse now.

4221. Are his stock good half-bred stock?—I believe they are, I have seen some of them very good, I never bred from him myself.

4222. What horses do you use yourself?—I have got a half-bred horse myself, he is as nearly thoroughbred as could possibly be. I cannot follow his granddam's pedigree far enough, and he is not in the stud book, he was got by Blairdrummond by Blair-Athol, and his dam by Solon, I could not follow the breeding of the dam far enough, but the horse is getting very well.

4223. And in your opinion what stallion do you consider most suitable for the ordinary mare of the district, you spoke of the mares being light and weedy?—Yes, as a rule a great many of them are. Well there are three classes of horses I would recommend for the district, there would be the thoroughbred for those who can afford to wait for the progeny to come up to the proper age, and afford to train them, and who can afford to have the proper mares to put to the thoroughbred horse. Then the half-bred for the man who could not afford to pay the big fees and wants to sell the produce earlier, if he wants to get a bit of farm work out of them they will also do it, and the thoroughbred would not as a rule, I think they would be very useful for the class of farmers who would not give the fee of the thoroughbred horse and would not wish to have him because he would be much more expensive in his keep if properly done, the half-bred could be much more cheaply kept, and if you don't feed the thoroughbred we all know he is nowhere. To improve the size of the small mares you want something big and useful for agricultural work; I believe in the Clydesdale to improve the size for agricultural purposes, he is the purest bred of all those large horses and most useful.

4224. Then the three sires you would recommend are the thoroughbred, a good half-bred, and the Clydesdale?—Yes, sir, and the half-bred it should be recollected is the first cross from the thoroughbred horse and good old well-shaped Irish mare of the district, the good short-legged good shouldered mare with stepping action and free from hereditary taint.

4225. Have you always lived in Galway?—Yes, since I was born.

4226. Do you see any difference in the breeding of the horses there now, do you think they are improving or deteriorating?—Well, somewhere about when I began to know what horses where first in my boyhood I think the horses were better then, and I think they fell away for a considerable time and got weedy, but for the last two or three years I notice that there is an improvement. I think the horses are getting better action, and I attribute that very much to the interest that has been taken in the breeding of horses by the Royal Dublin Society and those connected with it.

4227. Do the Connemara ponies come into your district in droves?—We have an occasional one. Some of our people go down and buy them, and very useful they are for harness work and small farm work.

4228. Did you ever breed hunters out of them?—I have; I have bred one of the best hunters I ever had out of a Connemara mare by a thoroughbred horse, Steelboy by Tom Steele.

4229. Have you any personal experience of breeding out of Hackney horses?—I never have, but I have seen some in my locality, there are a couple

owned by my neighbour Lord Ashtown, one of them, I consider one of the best specimens of the breed that could possibly be shown by anyone.

4230. And their produce?—I saw a good many with Lord Ashtown, and they look to be nice animals, but the people about I think do not seem to have availed themselves very much of the sires.

4231. The farmers don't seem to be favourably disposed to the Hackney stallions?—No, they don't care about them; personally I don't like them.

4232. You have bred a hunter out of a Connemara pony by a thoroughbred horse?—I have a good one.

4233. If that Connemara pony had been got by a Hackney stallion would you have expected to have bred as good a hunter?—I think not. I am sure there was not a drop of the Hackney in her. There was nothing known about Hackneys in that district at the time. It was a good many years ago. She seemed to be of a good old type. She may have had a cross of the Arab in her; something very good in the animal. My idea of the Hackney is that he cannot get a good hunter. I don't see how he can from his action.

4234. Not himself but the mare got by the Hackney stallion, do you think she would be likely to produce a good hunter?—I don't like the drop for hunting at all. I am sure they are useful in a way, and they are very showy nice horses about a park or town, and I think they might go nine or ten miles very well, but if you wanted them to go fifty or sixty you would be a long time coming to the end of your journey.

4235. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood in Connemara is likely to affect hunter breeding in Galway?—To a certain extent. If they come to a size in Connemara they might be brought further into the country, and I consider that would do a great deal of harm. I would be very sorry to see it get in. I think it would spoil our western Irish hunters altogether if the Hackney blood got in. They may be useful in their own way, I suppose they are, but I don't think they can have power of endurance from the great high knee action they have. I think they must wear themselves out. They pound too much, and another thing that action appears to me to come more from the knee than from the shoulder. That I consider must wear the animal out, and they cannot have the power of endurance of a horse with the ordinary fair level action. I like the even action, more low than high.

4236. Mr. CAREW.—Too great a waste of power?—That is it, altogether too great a waste of power.

4237. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say you think the blood of the Hackney is a soft blood; you say that you think that he is all very well for going eight or ten miles, but that he would not do the long journey that we are in the habit of doing with the hack car horse of the present day?—That is my opinion of him.

4238. Do you think that if this blood was introduced in a large way in the district that it would in course of time tend to produce a softer bred animal than you have got at present?—I am perfectly certain it would and they would not be nearly as suitable to the district as the animals that would be bred from a good half-bred horse.

4239. And if so it would tend to deteriorate the breed and it would also tend to damage the prestige that the breed now has got as being courageous with great stamina?—I am sure it would.

4240. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Have any of these American horses reached your district?—No, not exactly my district, but I have seen a couple of them in Roscommon, at least I have seen two Argentine horses.

4241. CHAIRMAN.—Not stallions?—No, they were geldings, they were brought over there to hunt, and most useless brutes they were, cross made animals with no shape or power.

4242. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Did they try to hunt these animals?—They did, they were a complete failure, no more of them came, and those were done away with as soon as possible.

4243. You have not seen any of the North American horses? No, I have not.

4244. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—You say that you have seen some of the stock got by Lord Ashtown's Hackney horses?—I have.

4245. What ages were they?—I have seen them as foals and one and a half year old.

4246. No more than that?—Not more than that.

4247. So you could not really judge what they would grow into?—I could not be sure what they would do as trained horses.

4248. I want to try to arrive at what class of animal they would grow into, for what purpose could they be used whether as riding or driving horses, or both combined?—They struck me as being more like harness horses, any of them I saw, I thought that would be about what they would be suitable for.

4249. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know of any other instances of hunters being bred out of Connemara ponies besides the one you had?—I have often heard of people having good hunters out of Connemara ponies.

4250. Then you think that Connemara ponies are brought into your district and used as hunter brood mares?—No, sir, they are not generally, it is only a very isolated case.

4251. Do you think that Connemara would be suited for a thoroughbred horse, do you think that the produce would be sufficiently hardy?—I think not.

4252. You think they would require some stronger and coarser horse?—I believe so.

4253. Practically your opinion of the Hackneys has been formed on Lord Ashtown's horses?—It has, I know very little about them unless what I have seen of Lord Ashtown's horses, one of them is a beautiful horse to look at and one of the best movers I ever saw, a horse called Marmaduke, a chestnut horse, perhaps you have seen him.

4254. You like him the best of the two?—Well, that is a matter of opinion, for myself I don't think he might be as useful as the other one, perhaps not, but he is more showy to look at.

4255. Is your opinion as to the breeding of Hackneys formed on what you have been able to learn from Lord Ashtown?—Oh, I have seen Hackneys before I saw them there, but I have not been watching them as closely as I have since Lord Ashtown got them, for I drive a good deal past by the road where those horses are, and I take a look at them over the fence and form my own opinion. But of course I have seen Hackneys before, and my opinion is that there is too much waste of power about them for endurance.

4256. You think they would soften the blood in the native horses?—Yes.

4257. Where does the soft blood in the Hackney come from?—I believe from their action and the way I have seen them get so heated in work that they would not have anything like the enduring power of our horses.

4258. Where have you seen them get heated—in shows?—No, in the ordinary work, of course I don't mind it in shows.

4259. Where?—I have seen them in some parts of England.

4260. Animals you know to be Hackneys?—Yes.

4261. Where do you think the soft blood comes in?—I know nothing about the breeding of Hackneys, I may admit that I have never had any experience of them, only I formed that opinion.

4262. You have not seen Hackneys that have not got extravagant action, but only ordinary action, and can use their shoulders?—I have seen some Hackneys that had not as high action as others, I believe it is not natural to the Hackney to use his shoulders properly, I believe he is not made for that.

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4263. But that is only your opinion from a limited experience?—From a limited experience indeed, but from what I know of them I would not breed from them.

4264. Do you think the Clydesdale is a good cross with the Irish mare?—You want something to throw weight and strength into those weedy mares, and I believe he is the truest blood to do it, and he is always a good stepper as a rule.

4265. Then you think action is a desirable quality in a horse?—Of course it is, now I am talking of that low class horse, principally for agricultural work, and of course it is a great point to get the agricultural horse to walk well.

4266. Are the Irish mares deficient in action as a rule, the common mares of the farmers?—Well, there are a good many rather crooked with straight thick shoulders and a great many of them cross-made. The people say: "We will have something out of the mare and we will send her to a sire and she will do our work along with breeding a foal," it is a great inducement to them to get something out of her. As a rule they require to breed some animal that they can work on their farms in addition to breeding for sale, I believe that is the only way that horse-breeding would be profitable to the small farmer.

4267. Have you seen many of the produce of the Clydesdales and the mares of your district?— I have, a great many.

4268. And are they a fairly nice animal to look at?—I would rather have the second or third cross away from the Clydesdale.

4269. You would rather breed back again to the thoroughbred?—I would, because I think from the first cross they perhaps get too heavy and big and clumsy.

4270. Too like the sire?—That is so, but a drop throws great strength into the small mare and her progeny.

4271. In the half-bred stallions that you would register would you require any particular number of crosses?—I would not go further than the first cross of the thoroughbred horse on to a good well-shaped old Irish mare, that would be my idea of what the half-bred horse should be.

4272. And would you register a horse like that until he had been proved by his stock?—Well, I think I would when you have good judges to look at them, of course I would have them properly examined as to their soundness and shape and everything of that kind, and then I would register him without going any further.

4273. And you think it is safe when you are selecting a sire to judge by his appearance when you have no back pedigree to go upon?—Well, it goes a long way, of course, as a rule like begets like.

4274. Even when the breeding is uncertain?—Of course I would like to know as much as possible about the breeding.

4275. Would you not think the result would be much more likely to be certain when you were able to trace his pedigree back for several generations?—Most certainly.

4276. But at the same time you would register a sire without being able to trace his pedigree?—I would if he was a really good looking one and there was no unsoundness, and good shapes.

4277. Do you think in your district it would be easy to find many good half-bred sires?—I know of a few. There is one horse, the best horse I ever knew, in my district, and he made more money for the people than any horse I ever knew, that was Thunderbolt.

4278. How was he bred?—A half-bred horse by Old Thunderbolt, which was thoroughbred, and by Smallhopes, one of the best horses we had in our country for getting weight-carrying hunters.

4279. He was a great big-boned horse?—Yes.

4280. A big-sized horse himself?—Yes, 16 hands.

4281. Is he in the country still?—Yes, this half-bred horse is within two miles of Woodlawn, a farmer named Flanagan owns him, he is an old horse now.

4282. Do you think there are many horses of that type?—No, there are not, this is a horse that got saleable useful horses, sometimes good hunters, and sometimes harness horses and a great many cavalry remounts, and his gets as a rule were saleable with no hereditary disease unless there was something very wrong with the mare. I have got £70 for three year olds out of the halter got by that horse, I have got £140 for a four-year-old trained hunter by him, if you might call a four-year-old a trained hunter. I have sold them at £120, £130, and £140.

4283. But these were out of well-bred mares?—Yes, good half-bred mares.

4284. Was there a Clydesdale standing in the same district?—Yes, there has been a Clydesdale all through my memory within nine or ten miles.

4285. Which horse would be most popular with the farmers, a horse like Thunderbolt or the Clydesdale?—Thunderbolt by far, he got too many mares, his produce were easily sold, they did the farm work and it did not injure them and they could be sold at four and five years old.

4286. But still you think there is a necessity for some horse like the Clydesdale?—I do, I believe that the ordinary small farmer won't pay the fee of a good half-bred horse, not to talk of a thoroughbred horse, so he must have something at a low figure, and then to supply that want I think I would give him the Clydesdale before anything else rather than those mongrel breeds that are in the country at present.

4287. I suppose there are a great many bad stallions in the country at present?—It is infested with them, it would be very well to have sires registered, I believe thoroughly in that.

4288. Would you put a general tax on entire horses and then reduce it, provided they were sound, or have you arrived at any particular plan?—It would be interfering very much with the rights of the subject to say "you must get rid of a certain class of horse," saying to a man "you must do this" or "you must do that," and making away with his property, I don't believe in that, but I would certainly put a good tax on a bad horse, and then, when it would be proved sound and all that to reduce it to a nominal figure.

4289. And you would not put any tax on mares?—No, I don't think there would be any occasion to do that. I think if the system I propose was adopted about the mares, that the mares shown at local shows and got prizes should in order to induce the owners to keep those mares get the service of the best Society or Government horse gratis, I think nothing would have more effect than that.

4290. Would you brand those?—No, because that might interfere with the value of them afterwards to the farmer.

4291. How would you be sure that the same mare was kept?—I would be almost sure, I would first have the owner give a guarantee, and then have veterinary surgeons and competent men to describe these mares properly and keep a proper record of them, and I don't think then there could be very many mistakes in the matter.

4292. You have not heard of such instances as having happened of mares being painted different colours to come in and get the service free?—I have heard of a good deal of scheming, but that could be obviated by a little looking after.

4293. Do you think that it is easy to ascertain the correct pedigree from the farmers when you are buying horses from them?—It is not very easy to get at the correct pedigrees unless you know some of the neighbours in the district. I often buy horses from the farmers, and when I do I make inquirise

about them, but you cannot believe all you hear from the owners.

4294. Do you think they are taking more trouble about keeping the pedigrees of the animals they have?—I think they are more interested in horse-breeding altogether, and more anxious to do the thing well though they have been getting bad prices.

4295. But the prices of all horses, except the very best ones, have fallen steadily during the last four years?—Very much, and there has been very little demand for remount horses. At the great fairs of Ballinasloe and Banagher where we used to sell a large number, there were very poor prices this year.

4296. Even from foreign Governments?—It was very hard to sell them.

4297. Were there plenty of remounts to be sold?—There were a great many, and people had to sacrifice them or bring them home.

4298. What becomes of these remount horses when they cannot be sold?—I suppose they must be sold then for agricultural purposes and harness at a very small price, I think I had seven of them myself at Banagher fair, and out of the seven I only sold one, they were all suitable for remounts I think, at least all but one which was too small and I could not get them away unless at a sacrifice, they were only three years old, so I said I would let them remain on the farm and see what they would do at four-year-old.

4299. Would they pay for the breeding?—They would not pay at the price I was getting, because I take more trouble than some people do about foals; in my district a great many people take no trouble about foals, but let them run about the farm during the winter and let them pick up what they can, and, as a consequence, they never grow as they should, but I shed my foals during the winter and give them plenty of oats and hay, and let them run in a dry field during the day and put them in the shed at night, and let them have oats in the morning, and they grow bigger as a rule. I don't believe these horses I speak about would have grown to remounts only for having fed them as foals.

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Mr. Samuel Johnston.

4300. Mr. CAREW.—What age is Thunderbolt?—He must be over 20 years of age.

4301. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—There were two Thunderbolts, one belonging to Mr. Alexander, I forget who the other belonged to, one was a very speedy horse?—A big brown horse.

4302. I think it was by Stockwell?—Well, that is not the horse I alluded to, this other horse was bred by the late Mr. Irwin, of County Galway.

4303. Mr. CAREW.—You don't know what he was by?—By Smallhopes.

4304. Sir T. ESMONDE.—Do you possess any of these old Irish mares?—I do, I have a couple of them with a great deal of that old type.

4305. Then you believe it is a really genuine race of mares?—I believe it is, some of those old mares died with me, and I kept on their breeds, I kept their daughters to breed from.

4306. Do you think it would be possible to preserve that breed in any way?—I am afraid it is rather too far gone.

4307. I suppose really we have no definite information about it?—No, I don't think so, it is a thing nearly everyone knows something about, but still we cannot go far back to trace it, the fact remains that it is a capital breed.

4308. With you are there any farmers that have breeds of horses like that in their families for generations?—A great many, and would not part with them.

4309. Mr. WRENCH.—You have never driven Hackneys yourself?—Never.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

NINTH DAY.—WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH, 1896

Nov. 25, 1896.

Present:—Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, (in the Chair), HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM, MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P., COL. ST QUINTIN, and MR. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. JOHN H. BARRY, Ballyvonare, Doneraile, Co. Cork, examined.

Mr. John H. Barry.

4310. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Barry, you live in the county Cork?—Yes.

4311. You farm land yourself?—I hold land myself; yes.

4312. You have had considerable personal experience of the breeding of horses, I think?—Yes; since I was a boy I was more or less mixed up with them.

4313. Will you tell us what sort of horse you breed?—Well, I breed off a good class of mare.

4314. What class of stallion?—Always a thoroughbred stallion.

4315. When you speak of a good class of mare, you mean a mare got by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes; generally she has one or two crosses of the thoroughbred horse that I can trace. I find they produce the very best hunters.

4316. Are these mares chiefly of your own breeding or do you buy them from the farmers?—Well, they are chiefly of my own breeding, and if I buy them from the farmers I know their breeding. I may buy young ones which may go into farm work. I find if I can get a mare of that class that works gently on a farm, that she produces a very fine healthy foal and generally sound.

4317. Are these mares that you buy usually bred from a thoroughbred horse, do you know?—Yes, certainly they have one cross of the thoroughbred.

4318. Some witnesses have spoken to us of what they call the old Irish mare; does that convey anything to you?—The old Irish mare—I happened to come across some old documents—what I call the old Irish mare was a strain that remained in the country, that was generally got by a good class of horse, a hunter class of horse. I just happened to have this (produced). It is a very old bill that will show you the class of horse. The strain remained in the country—the Andrew strain, the Merry Andrew strain.

4319. What is popularly called the old Irish mare is usually a mare got by a half-bred horse?—Got by a half-bred horse without anything at all of what we call the English breed—Clydesdale, Suffolk Punch, or any of those breeds.

4320. Mr. CAREW (referring to the bill produced by the witness).—This is an advertisement of March 22nd, 1822:—"A horse owned by Mr. Edmund G. Barry, a genuine bred Merry Andrew, got by Old Andrew hunter sire with Bevin's Old Andrew mare, as elegant a hunter as ever was mounted, and for which mares at two years old 150 guineas were refused. He is a dark bay, and from his symmetry of shape and great strength, well known to be of the best hunter blood in Ireland; is allowed by some of the best judges to be one of the most promising hunt-

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ing sires in this county, many of whom have already subscribed to send mares, but no mare to be served after the 20th of July, and any mare which misses this season shall be served next year. Two guineas and a crown for the groom."

Witness.—I had a direct descendant of that horse until a short time ago, when she died.

4321. CHAIRMAN.—"Merry Andrew," by "Andrew." Was Andrew a thoroughbred horse?

Mr. CAREW.—Hunter sire, "Old Andrew," it says.

Witness.—Here is another old document. This is a funny thing.

4322. Mr. CAREW, referring to document.—This is in writing—"'Merry Andrew,' lately purchased from Sir Edward O'Brien, Bart., by Mr. George Clancy, of Cratloe, County Clare. He is to stand at Ardsallus, in the said county, from the 20th of March to the 10th of August next, and is to be let out to mares at two guineas a let as trials, and a crown for the groom, the money to be paid down before the horse is let out of the stable. He was bred by his Grace the Duke of Bolton, and was got by 'Fox.' His dam was full sister——" and so on * * "His great-grand dam was by Mr. Place's White Arabian, on a thoroughbred mare of Mr. Treganville. 'Merry Andrew' won the 700 Guineas' stakes at Newmarket in April, 1735, and the Thousand Guinea Stakes in October after, from twelve of the best horses in England; and in the year 1736 he won His Majesty's Plate at Lewis, near Canterbury.—Sir Edward O'Brien, Bart." That is tracing back.

Witness.—That is the strain so far as a hundred years ago, and I thought it would be interesting.

4323. Mr. CAREW.—It is getting somewhat at the root of the old Irish mare.

Witness.—What I call the old Irish mare was descended from that class of horse; they remained in the county and the farmers would speak of "the old strain and the old mare." They generally kept one of the old mares in the family. The Andrew strain was one particular strain in the country. There was another strain, a horse called "Diamond," got out of a Diamond mare.

4324. CHAIRMAN.—A half-bred horse?—No, I think it must have been a thoroughbred horse.

4325. They breed a good many horses in your district?—A good many horses have been bred in my district, and if you ask me our district, which I call North Cork, or the Duhallow hunting district—if I was put to it I would go to it before any district I know in Ireland to get a really good hunter, and I attribute that very much. I have another old document that I thought would be interesting. There was an old gentleman, a Mr. Hutchins, who was a bachelor and a man of means, and his fad, if you think it so, was his great passion and love for horses. I happened to have all these (indicating documents), and I put them by as a matter of curiosity. In August, 1839, this old gentleman sold 72 horses. He called an auction and sold 72 horses, and they were all one better bred than the other, all thoroughbred horses. A great many of these horses remained—some of them were sold very low—a great many remained in the county scattered about. I could trace the pedigree of several to horses purchased at this auction.

4326. Mr. CAREW.—What was the chief strain in those horses?—Virginia, grey mare, Washington, Regent, Oakstick, Potemkin.

4327. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think the farmers are sufficiently careful about breeding from their best mares; about keeping the best mares?—No, I am afraid not. I am sorry to say that latterly the farmers have been selling their good mares when they have been offered fair prices. The French bought a few years ago a great many of our good mares.

4328. Do you think the mares have deteriorated in your country?—I am afraid yes. The good mares are picked away and the rubbish bred from. Sometimes a mare got a blemish, a fine mare got a blemish; she was generally put to stud and generally produced a paying stock.

4329. Otherwise they only bred from the mares they could not sell?—In many cases yes.

4330. Do you think that the farmers show a discrimination in selecting the sires for their mares?—I am afraid not much.

4331. What do you think influences them most?—Cheapness, friendship and porter. They patronise friends. We have had some wretched horses.

4332. Do you think that the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society has worked well?—Well, it has worked very well, but I think it might be improved a little.

4333. In what way?—Well, I think you might make some alterations in the prizes you give.

4334. In what way would you suggest?—I would give more encouragement to induce farmers to keep over a very good class of mares. I would give substantial prizes for good four year old mares. I don't think I would go under.

4335. Do you approve of breeding from two-year olds?—No, not as a rule. I tried it in a few instances myself and I didn't find it successful. The two-year old mare is not a sufficiently good nurse. I have known two-year olds with rather weedy foals at first and they afterwards bred a good foal. The great thing is the nursing. Unless they nurse the foal you cannot have substance or bone. They are always weeds.

4336. And you think that more substantial prizes to four-year old mares would be the greatest inducement to farmers?—I think I would give more substantial prizes to sound four-year old mares, good bony mares either stinted to a thoroughbred certified sound stallion, or with foal at foot got by a thoroughbred stallion. I think, now for instance, supposing a man had a good promising three-year old mare, and that he thought he would get £35 for her and he would get it easily for a trooper, for a good clean mare, if that man thought he would get a £10 or a £20 prize, he would say "I will run the chance of a foal and get my £20," I think that man would consider before he would sell the mare. I don't think I would give prizes for old mares.

4337. You would only give a prize to a mare that was covered by a thoroughbred horse or had a foal at foot?—Only to a mare covered by a sound thoroughbred horse or with a foal at foot.

4338. Don't you find that some of these half-bred horses—horses of the same class as "Merry Andrew"—still exist in your country and breed very good hunters?—Yes, very good hunters, but I think the thoroughbred better. You have more reliability in him. You may breed very good hunters from the half-bred, but I think the thoroughbred is more reliable.

4339. There was a horse called Garrett, a half-bred, in the county Cork?—He is by this very strain I speak of. He was got by "Arthur" I think, and "Arthur" was a "Sir Hercules" horse. They were a very good strain of horse.

4340. There was a horse called Hutchins' "Hercules"—That was Mr. Hutchins owned Hercules?—One of these very horses; Mr. Hutchins parted with that horse for a Kerry cow—that thoroughbred horse. That thoroughbred horse then went into the hands of a farmer, and I may say that horse left his mark. He was first put to mares at a very cheap fee. He was a blind horse, a lopped-eared horse, but he was got by the famous Sir Hercules out of a mare got by Polegar. That was thirty years ago.

4341. Was Hutchins' Hercules a thoroughbred horse?—He was by the Sir Hercules.

4342. I thought he was a half-bred horse?—He was by Sir Hercules out of a mare got by Polegar. She is here in this list. Polegar is in one of those lists.

4343. Have you had any personal experience of breeding from Hackneys or Clydesdale stallions?—No, I have just seen Hackneys and admired them as

trotting horses, but I have very little experience of Hackneys, they are not much in the south.

4344. Do you think that the introduction of the Hackney blood into West Cork would have any effect upon the hunter breeding in North Cork and the other hunter breeding districts of Cork?—Well, I think that if you breed at all you must try to breed the very best. You will have plenty of misfits, do your best, I don't think anything you breed from a Hackney will be anything more than a misfit. You will have plenty of misfits and do your best.

4345. I was not at all referring to breeding in the hunter producing parts of Cork, but I want to ask you whether you thought that the introduction of the Hackney blood into the West of Cork would have any effect upon the hunter breeding in East Cork or North Cork?—I suppose not, but I think what we ought to encourage would be the breeding of the best and most paying animal, I don't think these second or third class horses would pay. If we do anything we ought to encourage farmers to breed what will pay best.

4346. Do you know West Cork?—Not well.

4347. You have been there?—I know it of course, I think the class of horse there is very poor.

4348. Have you been in Bantry?—Yes.

4349. You know the class of mare that you see there?—Yes, I have friends living in the district. If they wanted anything they would never think of looking for a horse about that country; if they wanted a good harness or saddle horse they would come to our country.

4350. There are very few horses coming up from West Cork into your district?—Very few, there are a few about Bandon which sometimes used to come—a few.

4351. But there are a great number of horses bred in West Cork?—I believe so, that is about Bantry. I don't think they extend beyond Bantry—a good class of horse, or beyond Bandon almost.

4352. What becomes of the bad class of horses bred on the mountain side?—I think they live and die there.

4353. I take it that you consider the thoroughbred horse is the most suitable sire for getting a hunter or high-class horse?—Yes, decidedly, I think that is the horse we ought to encourage. If a man likes to breed from the Hackney it is his own business. If he is so fond of them he can easily get them. I would not subsidize that class of horse, I think the thoroughbred is the proper animal—a well boned, sound horse.

4354. Mr. CAREW.—What height?—He might be any height if he is good, about 16 I suppose, I have known them get a big horse.

4355. CHAIRMAN.—Are you in favour of the idea that has been propounded to us by several witnesses that stallions should be registered and examined and passed sound before they are permitted to serve?—I think so, sir, and I think I would give as an encouragement three money prizes, and I think then to approved mares I would give an order on a registered thoroughbred stallion at say £1 a mare and pay the difference. I would say to the farmer "you can send your horse to any thoroughbred horse; you will get that horse for a pound and we will pay the difference," and I would have an understanding with the proprietor of the stallion. I think that would be a useful thing.

4356. You think there is a sufficiency of good suitable, sound thoroughbred stallions?—I think we are very well off for stallions. There is a Mr. Flannery, of Churchtown, very enterprising; Mr. Preston, of Mallow, has some good horses; and a Mr. O'Leary has some horses. I think there is plenty of private enterprise to keep good stallions if they are encouraged.

4357. You think, as a matter of fact, that at the present time there is a sufficiency of good, sound, suitable stallions in North Cork?—I think there are enough of stallions in North Cork, and I would encourage those people who keep these stallions by giving them orders, by obliging people to send mares to them, not obliging them but by giving them an option of patronising them.

4358. You are in favour of registering sound, suitable, well-made, well-shaped thoroughbred horses?—Yes, that would be an inducement; the very fact of registering a stallion, it being known that he is registered, and that the produce is suitable or eligible to go in for prizes, that is an encouragement to the owner of the stallion.

4359. Would you, under any circumstances, register a half-bred sire?—I hardly think I would; I would not.

4360. You think it would be better in fact to draw the line hard and fast at thoroughbred horses?—To thoroughbred horses. If there is a half-bred suitable sire he would be patronised, because people will have those weedy mares and they will send them to him.

4361. Is there any other suggestion that you would like to make, Mr. Barry, with reference to the improvement of horses?—I don't know about this qualification as to valuation. I don't know that the better class of farmers at the higher valuation should be excluded from competing. They take a little pride in it, and although a man may have a high valuation his calls are comparatively high, and he may be just as needy a man as the man with a very low valuation, and I think any man who is farming would take a little pride in it. For instance, if we go in for prizes for cattle or butter, it is not because a man is valued at £500 or £300 that he is excluded. Why should a man in keeping horses be? He takes a pride in it, and his servants and his underlings take a pride in getting a prize. It would be a pity to exclude him.

4362. The idea is, no doubt, that a farmer of over £150 valuation is able to take care of himself?—I am sorry to say that I know men of high valuations that are just as needy and just as anxious to make a ten pound note as men of £50 valuation.

4363. You would be in favour of the £150 limit being removed?—I think so. I don't know that I would limit it at all. People take a little pride in it; and, apart from money matters, they like the rosette; they take a little pride in it.

4364. And you would be in favour of giving substantial prizes to young mares, of subsidizing stallions to a certain extent, and of giving the services to the prize mares at a very low figure to the registered stallions?—Yes.

4365. And the examination and registration of thoroughbred horses?—Yes.

4366. And the removal of limits?—Yes.

4367. Mr. CAREW.—Do you think that breeding in Ireland from a thoroughbred would produce stock strong enough for the work on the farm?—I do. I have seen well-shaped small thoroughbred stallions breed immense horses—there is a little horse called—he is dead now, I think—"Republican," not more than fifteen hands high. I have seen that horse produce horses of immense bone, great big horses.

4368. Mated with thoroughbred mares?—No, not with thoroughbreds, but with good plain half-bred mares or three-quarters bred.

4369. Don't you think it would be very necessary to have a well bred half-bred horse with a great many strains of the thoroughbred blood in him?—I think it would be useful. I am not sure that I would encourage them much. I think the thoroughbred horse is far more reliable.

4370. Would you be in favour of every man who has a stallion taking out a licence?—I think so; I would encourage that; it would be a kind of information to the people, you know, to go to a sound stallion.

4371. The fair of Cahirmee is in your district?—It is in my district, a very fine fair.

4372. One of the largest in the South of Ireland?—It is.

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4373. Do you see any deterioration in the class of horses exhibited there?—There are horses I am sorry to say at Cahirmee proper rather forestalled. All those dealers have touters; they are all spotted and very often bought in private stables by dealers beforehand. They don't wait for the Cahirmee fair field business. Men will go and buy them at home.

4374. You say the valuation is too high?—I don't say it is too high.

4375. What would you fix it at?—I would take it off altogether, and let every fellow go in for it.

4376. It is necessary in order to improve the horses to encourage the big farmers as well as the small farmers?—Yes, I would not prevent the gentleman farmer. As I told you it is not the money prize so much as the pride in it.

4377. Are there any horses now with the Merry Andrew blood in your district?—Yes, thereare. You can trace them, I think I have some mares with it; I have two Victor mares, they were beautiful hunters, and I can trace through their dam back to the Andrew blood.

4378. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—You have in your district, I suppose, a great number of very small holdings, small farmers?—There are not a great many very small ones.

4379. They are all capable of bringing up their young stock, are they, do you think?—Not all. You know if a man has a good colt he is sure to get a good price for him.

4380. Would you encourage breeding with the very small farmers?—Well, I would, yes, if they had a good mare. I do not care to whom a good mare belongs, be he rich or poor. I should encourage breeding from a good mare.

4381. What would you say was a sufficient holding to give him a chance of bringing up his colt well?—If a small farmer has a good valuable animal he will supplement his feeding, if it is not good enough he will get grass for his horse, or he will manage it some way, he is cute enough, or sell it for a good price. I know a mountainy farmer who bred a good colt. The colt was sold as he thought for a good price, £25 or £30, as a two-year-old. That animal was sold back to the neighbourhood again. I saw it the other day sold for something under £100, about £5 under £100, a four-year-old horse got by this same little horse Republican.

4382. Do you think he would breed him with any particular object—beyond desiring an animal to breed to any type at all, has he any idea of what the animal is likely to grow into—he will put the mare to the first horse he comes to, won't he, or will he try to breed a high class horse?—I am afraid the small farmer will go to the cheapest horse; he won't go to a dear horse but to a convenient horse.

4383. And he does not unless the man who has got a certain strain of blood—he does not know what kind the animal is going to be, or care so long as he gets rid of him at the fair—he does not know whether a harness or a riding horse?—The small farmer does not; he goes in for a foal.

4384. Mr. WRENCH.—Mr. Barry, I think you said that these old Irish mares—you thought that they were descended from the hunting sires in the country before any English blood came in?—Yes.

4385. By English blood you mean?—What we call the Clydesdale. The very heavy cart horses, some of these have come into our country; these have been failures.

4386. Do you know there are about ninety cart horse stallions and half-bred cart stallions in the county Cork?—I did not know there were so many. I know there are some.

4387. Could you fix the time that those animals first came into the country?—I am afraid not, as long I remember there was an odd one here and there.

4388. Even before the famine?—I could not go beyond the famine.

4389. You don't remember their introduction?—No.

4390. Do you think it would be possible to get the pedigrees of any of these mares bred from the horses you mentioned. Do you think any of the farmers have kept their pedigrees?—I am afraid not.

4391. Then you don't think it would be possible from the mares in your district to breed up any hunting sires of the same breed, the same strain?—Well, as I tell you, I have a mare got by a horse called Old Victor, and I can trace her pedigree back to the Andrew.

4392. To this horse called Andrew?—Yes, to the Cork Merry Andrew, that is to the strain Andrew, not exactly to this horse but to the strain got by a horse called Merry Andrew; he belonged to a man in the west of the county near Kildorrery.

4393. Do you think there are many other people who can do so?—No, I am afraid not.

4394. So that it would be impossible to try to breed up a lot of horses, more of the old blood?—I am afraid it would be.

4395. You would not register any half-bred horse?—I would not. I would let a half-bred horse find his level; if he was good he would be sought after.

4396. These animals that were bred out of these good mares by a thoroughbred horse if perpetually crossed by a thoroughbred horse would they not in time become too fine—would there be any danger of that?—I have seen very fine well boned thoroughbred horses.

4397. You mean in Cork, grown on good land?—I don't think they do deteriorate much. The fillies do if they are badly cared.

4398. But you are referring to animals grown on good land?—Reared on good land and well kept, and I think the first year or two has a great deal to say to the matter.

4399. The first winter?—The first winter, and the milking qualities of the dam too.

4400. Do you think that hunters bred now in Cork—good hunters—are as good as the horses used to be?—I think they are as good as you can get in the world.

4401. As good as they used to be thirty years ago?—Just as good.

4402. You think that the men who breed them have been able to keep clear of this imported blood?—I think they have. I have come across some of those good looking horses with their dam, with some of the Clydesdale blood or something of that kind in them, and I found them very soft.

4403. You yourself have been able to keep clear of that?—I kept clear of them. I would not think of buying them. If I saw a colt no matter how handsome of that kind of thing I would not buy him, and if I had the misfortune of having him I would get rid of him as soon as I could. I would not like to ride him myself.

4404. Would you take the trouble to find out how the animal was bred before buying?—Always, I try to go back as far as I can, but it is not always very reliable information what you get.

4405. You would not breed from a two-year-old filly, I think you said?—No.

4406. Do you think it is easier to get a filly in foal at two years old than at three years old?—It is very easy.

4407. And that is the chief recommendation in your opinion, is it?—I don't approve of breeding from two-year-old fillies.

4408. You don't think it would be a good thing to encourage the farmers to breed from two-year-old fillies?—No.

4409. So as to get a foal out of a good filly?—No. I would discourage, as much as I could, the breeding of inferior animals; I don't know what we will do with them.

4410. Mr. CAREW.—The chief objection is that they are not likely to be good nurses?—Yes.

4411. Mr. WRENCH.—In recommending thoroughbred horses, I understand you are referring to your own district, and you don't pretend to make any suggestion for the congested districts on the west coast?—No, I don't. I confess my own experience of Hackneys is very limited.

4412. And you think the system adopted by the Dublin Society now of registering stallions, thoroughbred stallions—do you think that is a good one?—I do, a very good one.

4413. And you think that the people who have thoroughbred stallions in your district would like to have them on the Dublin Society's list?—I think so, if they have good sound stallions.

4414. I see that a great many of the thoroughbred stallions in Cork do not appear to be on the list?—I am afraid there are a great many unsound thoroughbreds in Cork. If a man has a sound stallion, and if he thinks he is perfectly sound, he would be glad to have him on that list.

4415. You appear to be very well supplied in Cork, you have 26 thoroughbreds on the register and 40 off the register?—I think we are.

4416. Do you think that most people who have stallions which are sound would like to have them on the register?—I think any man having a sound stallion would like to have him on the register.

4417. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I would like to ask you, with regard to these small farmers who you say hardly know what they are going to produce, do you think that the opinion of a man of that class, who only goes for a foal, is worth taking, as to the class of horse that would suit his neighbourhood?—I think those weedy inferior horses are not worth breeding at all; they are not worth their cost. I would not encourage any man that would not try to go in for a really good class of horse. Do your best, you will have plenty of misfits. I don't know what you will do with that weedy kind of horse since bicycles and all those things came in.

4418. I don't quite mean that; I mean with regard to the individual himself, the small farmer—is his opinion worth taking as to the class of horse that should stand in his neighbourhood, if he only breeds for the sake of getting a foal and does not know what he is going to breed—if there was any grant of money for his district is his fancy to have any weight in that way?—I don't think it ought; if a man breeds at all he ought to breed a good article.

4419. You would legislate for him and not allow him to legislate for himself?—Yes.

4420. His actual opinion is not of very great value?—No value.

4421. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think the opinion of the small farmers of the west coast of value—don't they know what they want for their own use?—I have no experience of the west.

4422. Therefore, you are not speaking of them?—I am not speaking at all of them. I know nothing of the west.

R. E. LONGFIELD, Longueville, Mallow, examined.

4423. CHAIRMAN.—You are a magistrate and deputy-lieutenant of the county Cork?—Yes.

4424. You breed horses yourself?—Yes.

4425. What sort of horses do you breed?—Hunters from hunting mares.

4426. You breed entirely from hunting mares?—I have bred cart horses, a few cart horses.

4427. By Clydesdale stallions?—Yes.

4428. What class of horse do you think your part of Cork is particularly adapted to produce?—I agree with what Mr. Barry said that they can produce the very best, I think I can grow horses to their full size, I think well bred horses develop fully even better than cattle do.

4429. A good many farmers I suppose breed horses?—A great many, yes.

4430. Do you think they take any trouble about getting the best mare?—No, I don't think they do. I think they have got extremely bad mares now.

4431. You think they have deteriorated?—I think they have.

4432. Do you think they take sufficient trouble about selecting the stallions to mate them with?—No, I think not. I think they go to the nearest or the cheapest, or to a stallion belonging to a friend in many cases. Of course some do.

4433. Are there many cart stallions in your district?—No, there are more thoroughbred stallions than anything else in my immediate neighbourhood, I think.

4434. Do you think there is much cart blood now among the mares?—Oh, yes, I think there is here and there.

4435. Do you attribute the deterioration of the horses in any way to this cross, do you think there is more cart blood than there used to be?—Yes, I think a great number of cart horses were brought over thirty years ago or so.

4436. And the farmers used them with a view of getting more size?—Some of them did.

4437. There is a certain amount of this cart blood permeating through the mares?—I think so. I think what they call the old Irish hunters were good on account of the absence of that cart blood.

4438 Do you think the horses of the present day are as sound as they used to be?—I think they are very unsound. I think an enormous proportion of them are unsound, and I think a great number of stallions are unsound.

4439. You have a greater proportion of unsound now?—I am afraid so, a great number of whistlers.

4440. Chiefly whistling?—I think that is the common unsoundness.

4441. Do you attribute that to the stallions?—Principally; yes.

4442. Have you any experience of breeding from half-bred sires?—No, I have only bred from one.

4443. Do the farmers use them much to produce hunters?—There are very few in my neighbourhood. In other districts, some miles away to the west, there are, for instance in the Newmarket district about fifteen miles to the west of me I believe there are no thoroughbred horses.

4444. There are a certain number of half-bred sires?—A great number of half-bred horses.

4445. Do they produce good hunters?—No, I don't think they do as a rule.

4446. There are not a good many good horses bred in the Newmarket district?—No, I don't think so.

4447. Do you think that the Dublin Society scheme works well?—I think it is a very good thing to register sound horses. I think that is a very good thing, and I should suspect that a great many of the horses not registered are not sound.

4448. Do you agree with some witnesses who suggested that a horse that did not pass a veterinary examination should not be permitted to serve?—I think if it were possible it would be a very good thing.

4449. Or the licensing of stallions, it has been suggested to us that a heavy licence should be put upon stallions which would be reduced in case they passed an examination for soundness?—I would discourage the unsound ones as much as possible. I would prohibit them if possible, but I do not know the way it ought to be done.

4450. With regard to the mares, do you think the Dublin Society's scheme works well?—I think that a number of local shows would be useful, with, as Mr. Barry says, considerable prizes for young mares

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Mr. R. E. Longfield.

4451. Do you think there is any object in giving prizes to old mares?—I would rather give them to young ones, I think.

4452. When a mare is old she has to be a brood mare?—Yes, she is nearly done then.

4453. Do you think that the registration of horses—I suppose you know most of the registered horses in your part of Cork—do you think that they answer all the qualifications necessary for a stallion?—I have known one very bad one. I believe he was a sound but extremely unfortunate stallion; he was a very mischievous stallion; he cost me a great deal.

4454. A registered horse?—Yes.

4455. Do you mean he didn't get foals, or that he got bad foals?—Got bad foals.

4456. Mr. CAREW.—Unsound?—Yes, many of them.

4457. CHAIRMAN.—Do the farmers generally sell their horses at their own places, or do they part with them at fairs?—It depends upon the class of horses. If the farmer has a very good colt, the dealer will go to him; if he has a very valuable colt he need not take him to the fair.

4458. What sort of stallion do you think is most suitable to be encouraged in your district?—I should like the thoroughbred one.

4459. Do you think the farmers would appreciate a really thoroughbred horse if they got him at a reasonable fee?—I think so.

4460. The ordinary farmer only pays a very small fee?—In some cases it is very hard to say what they pay for the service. I believe some stallions serve for what they can get pretty well.

4461. Have you any suggestions that you would like to make with a view of improving the breeding of horses in North Cork?—I should like to keep out the unsound stallions and encourage the good mares; but it is a very difficult question.

4462. What would you suggest that those steps should be—what steps would you suggest?—Well, prizes for mares and some regulations for stallions. I am hardly prepared to say.

4463. Prizes for mares and registration at any rate of sound suitable stallions?—Registration; yes.

4464. Have you any experience of breeding from Hackney horses?—No, none.

4465. Do you think that the introduction of Hackney blood into West Cork would have any effect upon the horse-breeding in your part of the country?—After a time it might if the mares got by Hackney horses got scattered about the country.

4466. Do they, as a matter of fact, now come from West Cork into North Cork?—It is very hard to say; I don't suppose they often do.

4467. Do you know West Cork personally?—Yes, pretty well; I know the neighbourhood of Bantry and Glengariffe. There was formerly a very good breed of ponies about there, and they have gone—an extremely good breed of ponies.

4468. Do you think that that breed has disappeared?—Entirely.

4469. On account of the farmers using unsuitable stallions?—Oh, I fancy they sold off their ponies in the famine; I think so.

4470. They disappeared as long ago as that?—They did not quite disappear then because we had some at home, extremely good ponies that came from Glengariffe; I think one of them had some Arab blood in it, as good a pony as I ever saw.

4471. What would you suggest as being the best means of restoring that breed?—I don't know, I am sure.

4472. You don't know what stallion because it would have to be done by the introduction of a suitable stallion—what stallion do you think, from your knowledge of the ponies of Bantry and Glengariffe, would be suitable?—I think a great deal of that country is only suitable for breeding ponies. I think the Arab blood did good there, but you could not depend entirely on that. I think the Arab blood made its mark there many years ago. Mr. Bernard was said to have had an Arab there a great many years ago.

4473. You would suggest the reintroduction of the Arab blood?—No, I think it would be a country that Welsh ponies would do very well in.

4474. Do you think that the Hackney stallion is calculated to benefit the breed and improve the breed?—I do not think so.

4475. Have you any experience of Hackneys personally?—I have seen them and heard a great deal about them. I never owned one.

4476. You can only speak of their personal appearance then?—Yes.

4477. And from what you have seen of their personal appearance, do you think that they would be suitable stallions to put to those ponies?—I think if you can breed any animals as big as that I would try to have something well bred. I don't like their shoulders. The country that can feed animals of that size I think might breed something better.

4478. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—There are a good number of cart stallions down in your part of the country?—There is a Shire horse—there is a horse near me in the Shire Horse Stud Book, that I have used.

4479. Are they used a good deal by the farmers do you think?—I have heard that the farmers latterly have been putting mares to them in order to get colts of size and substance that they will sell young.

4480. And breeding from these cart stallions I presume that the produce is rather easy to tell, that he has cart blood in him?—Oh, it would be.

4481. If you were to have any other blood equally to what I should call soft blood, but one that you might not be able to tell so easily from the appearance, do you think it would be dangerous in the country or not?—I think it would. I think my country can breed the very best. You asked me about Hackneys. I should like to read a resolution passed by the County Cork Agricultural Society, on the 14th September. I belong to the Society for many years. May I read it?

"That we the members of the Committee of the Cork Agricultural Society, protest in the strongest manner against the introduction of the breed of Hackney horses into Ireland by the aid of state funds as being detrimental to the best interests of the farmers and the good of the country at large, so as to deteriorate that breed of horses for which Ireland has hitherto been justly celebrated."

4482. CHAIRMAN.—That was the Grand Jury?—No, the County Cork Agricultural Society—a very large Society. I think there are over 600 members.

4483. Was there a large attendance at that meeting?—I think so. It was passed unanimously.

4484. Were you present?—I cannot remember whether I was or not. I remember its being passed, whether I read it or whether I was there. I go to a great number of the meetings.

4485. Are the names of the proposer and seconder there?—No, I have not got them.

4486. Well it is stated to be passed unanimously?—Yes.

4487. Is that the official record?—No, it is a copy, but I have seen the official record.

4488. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—With regard to half-bred stallions, would you advocate the use of half-bred stallions if they were sound and suitable in action?—If there was a very little stain in them I don't think it would matter.

4489. But you should not object to use such a half-bred as could win a steeplechase or had won?—No, if he had proved himself a good breeder.

4490. If what?—If he had bred well he might be useful. I think if the stain was very small it might not matter. However, I would not register him if he had not proved himself a good breeder.

4491. Mr. CAREW.—You said that you were a member of this agricultural association?—Yes.

4492. You know that a great many farmers in the County of Cork are members?—Oh, yes, a great number.

4493. And that they approve of this resolution?—Yes, it was passed unanimously.

4494. Have you any experience of the Hackney blood, have you seen them?—I saw them: I saw them at the farm at Shankill yesterday, and often at shows.

4495. Your objection is that there is too much waste of force in their action?—Well, years ago I asked a gentleman who is a very good judge, what he thought of the Hackney, and he said—"There is nothing they can do that a thoroughbred cannot do a great deal better."

4496. That is the thoroughbred can get all the animals they can get, and in addition the hunter?—Yes, and there is a very important matter in a hunting country, that a farmer may often sell an unsound or lame horse very well, because they were good hunters. I have known two tenant farmers sell animals for a large sum in a fortnight which were both unsound, they were both lame, but such good hunters that people put up with that.

4497. You say the deterioration of horses is due in great measure to farmers selling their young mares?—I think they sell their good mares and have a very bad lot now.

4498. And the great desideratum is to offer them some inducement to keep them?—Yes.

4499. And also the deterioration is due to the number of bad stallions in the country?—I think many of the stallions are very bad and very unsound.

4500. You would approve of insisting that every man who kept a stallion should take out a licence?—Something of that sort.

4501. And that the licence should show on the face of it whether he was sound, and what the defects were?—Something of that sort.

4502. You also approve of registering the half-breds provided there was very little stain?—Yes.

4503. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I should just like to ask you if you know anything about the cross with the cart horse round about you. What class the produce is? Whether it supplies the needs of the farmers for their agricultural work? Whether it is large enough for them, and not too large?—There are a great many thoroughbred stallions near me, and I only know one really cart horse, there are not many of those.

4504. But does it grow a very heavy horse in your district?—Most of the farmers have lightish horses with some quality in them.

4505. Yes, but the produce of the cart horse in your country doesn't grow a great weighty animal, it grows a medium?—There are some big animals but not a great many of them, there are infinitely more thoroughbred stallions than cart stallions.

4506. You don't know what class of horse the Shire or Clydesdale throws, it is not a big weighty draft horse?—Not many of the very big ones. I have got some myself, but as a rule the mares the farmers breed from do not breed big heavy horses.

4507. That is what I mean. They are useful farm horses for that part of the country, I suppose?—Yes.

4508. Mr. WRENCH.—When you say there are infinitely more thoroughbred stallions than cart stallions, you are speaking of your own neighbourhood?—Yes, for miles around.

4509. And not of the county generally?—No.

4510. Do you think the mares have deteriorated?—Yes, I am afraid they have.

4511. In what way, have they become more coarse or weedy?—Some are more coarse, and I am afraid many are more unsound.

4512. And you think as good hunters are bred now as used to be bred, in your neighbourhood?—I fancy a smaller proportion are as good. There are some just as good but not so many.

4513. Not so many on an average?—No, I should think not. The smaller proportion would be very good, but an immense number of the young horses you see at fairs are unsound.

4514. And you attribute that to the unsoundness of the sires?—The unsoundness of the sires and the badness of the dams.

4515. I think you said you would advocate the registering of sires, it has also been suggested that we should have a tax on stallions, to be reduced to a nominal sum if sound. Would you approve of any suggestion in that direction?—I am not prepared to say that would be the best way to do it. I should like to encourage good ones.

4516. Your suggestion is to give prizes to young mares?—Yes, and local shows.

4517. Would it not take a lot of money to make that work?—I think it is worth spending money on it.

4518. Do you think a man would keep a mare for £10 if he could get a big price for her. I should give him more, I don't think £10 would be enough.

4519. Do you know what class of mares there are about Bantry and in West Cork?—No, I cannot say, I have not looked particularly at them.

4520. You never studied that country with a view to horse-breeding?—No.

4521. Do you know anything of the hardiness of the produce of Hackneys as compared with thoroughbreds?—I cannot say I do.

4522. Talking of that resolution to which you referred, do you know as a matter of fact there is not one Hackney stallion in the whole of the county of Cork?—They don't want to have them there.

4523. But there is not one?—No, I dare say not.

4524. And perhaps these people who passed this resolution know very little about them?—A great many of them are in the habit of going to shows.

4526. Do you think any of them breed from Hackneys?—I should say not.

4526. You have had a great experience of Ireland as a Grand Juror, and doing the county work, and in many other ways?—Yes.

4527. It is not very hard to get a resolution proposed and passed about anything?—I think these people know what they are about; we have a very good show in Cork; the Judges there told me they never had a better show of young horses.

4528. Did you ever hear it suggested that Hackneys should be sent into the good parts of Cork?—No, if they came to one part I believe they would spread to the other parts.

4529. Do you think now that any of the good hunters in your district are bred out of mares from Castletownbere and Bantry and these poor districts?—It is not likely.

4530. And you don't think the Hackney is such a wonderful animal that he is likely to breed horses that will be sought after as hunter brood mares in the future?—I suppose it is very hard to tell.

4531. Do you think that is likely?—Oh, no.

4532. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Should you be afraid if there were Hackney stallions largely used in the adjoining district that in course of time the blood would filter into your district and do harm?—I think it would spread insensibly; it would be very hard to tell how much, but I think it would spread by degrees.

4533. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think the effect of its spreading by degrees would have an effect on the hunter breed?—Yes, I think so.

4534. A deleterious effect?—I think so.

4535. Mr. WRENCH.—I presume you don't know how the Hackneys are bred, those that you are referring to?—No, I don't know whether they are a very old breed or not.

4536. You don't know anything about their origin?—No, I don't.

4537. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—What is it you object

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to about a Hackney, is it his appearance or breeding?—I don't like his appearance, and I have always understood that he was very soft, I don't like his shoulders, I don't like anything about him.

4538. He is supposed to have great action?—I am told he goes for a little while, then he does not go much further. Someone said that he was a good horse to drive out, but a bad horse to drive home.

4539. But you object to his shoulders, and do you think it would improve the mares of the country to get harness horses by such a sire?—No, I don't think so.

4540. That they would get better harness horses with that action and formation?—I don't think so.

4541. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you ever driven a Hackney?—No.

4542. Have you ever acted as a judge at any Horse Show?—No.

Captain Donnellan, M.P.

Captain DONNELLAN, M.P.

Captain Donnellan, M.P.

4543. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Cork?—Yes, sir.

4544. In what part?—East Cork, near Midleton, I might mention in the centre of a hunting district.

4544A. Mr. CAREW.—What hounds?—The United; they have their kennels at Midleton, and indeed I think East Cork may fairly be said to hold its own even with North Cork which has been praised so much, and I must say justifiably praised.

4545. CHAIRMAN.—Do you breed horses yourself?—Yes, I do; chiefly hunters: in fact I may say hunters are chiefly bred in East Cork.

4546. What sires do you use?—Well, I am a firm believer in the thoroughbred sire for hunting purposes.

4547. And what class of mares?—Well, I think that the only class of hunter that pays to breed at present is the weight-carrier. I think the light weedy horses are now practically unsaleable, and to breed the weight-carrying hunter you will require the thoroughbred horse and a good roomy well bred mare or half-bred mare.

4548. Got by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes; I should say so, if possible; of course the half-bred may be successful if crossed with a high-class mare, but, as a rule, Irish farmers don't keep such a class of mare, because she would not be any use for a farmer. Provided the sire is in the stud book, I think more shape and soundness are of greater importance for hunters than any particular strain of blood.

4549. Do you regard it as essential that he should be a thoroughbred horse?—Well, as a general rule, there are exceptions. I know cases in which half-bred horses have bred saleable hunters from good class mares.

4550. Do the farmers in your country breed many horses, around Midleton?—Yes, I should think so; it is practically as good a district for horse-breeding as any in the county of Cork.

4551. Do you think that the class of horses bred there has improved or deteriorated?—I don't think the system adopted by the Royal Dublin Society has improved the breed of horses in my district.

4552. That is the present system?—I think the class of horses at country fairs is no better now than before the system of premiums to sires was adopted.

4553. Premiums to sires—that system has been done away with since 1894, but, speaking generally, do you see any marked difference in the horses bred now in the neighbourhood of Midleton, do you think they are better or worse off than they used to be twenty or thirty years ago?—I think the mares have been deteriorating gradually, because as farmers have been getting poorer they have not been able to keep as good a class of mare; they are tempted to sell the best of the produce; farmers are always in need of money, and only keep mares they cannot realize a good price for.

4554. Have you any suggestions you would like to make towards reforming the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Well, I have a suggestion which, with your permission, I would like to read to the Commission. I am satisfied myself that some other plan must be adopted before the breed of Irish horses can be substantially improved.

4555. I would like to know if this suggestion which you are going to read is one that meets with your own approval?—Most certainly.

4556. Mr. CAREW.—It is not an original suggestion, but you have adopted it as your own?—Yes. I have permission to mention the name of the author, he is a well-known authority on this subject in the south of Ireland.

4557. CHAIRMAN.—Will you be so kind as to give the name if he has no objection?—Mr. Charles Furlong, of Fermoy, who is well-known as a judge of these mares that are selected for prizes, and so on. He says in the first place:—

"That steps should be directed towards improving the breeding mares, for, without suitable mares, it is impossible to breed marketable colts; all money available should be devoted to this purpose. None should be given in premiums to sires; there are plenty of men in Ireland with capital and enterprise to import high-class sires if there is a demand for their services, but men won't import such sires on the chance of winning a premium; the chief object should be to improve breeding mares; giving prizes of £3 or £4 to thirty or forty mares in each county won't accomplish this. Irish farmers are nearly always in want of money and sell their best mares, only keeping those they cannot realize a good price for; those five prizes given by the Royal Dublin Society to fall this residuum."

and in order to obviate this, this gentleman suggests the following scheme:—

1st.—That the £5,000 per annum now given away in prizes should be expended in buying cast hunting mares from hunting studs in England and Ireland. These mares when broken down through accidents or other causes are frequently sold by auction, and at these auctions suitable mares could be purchased for about £20 each—£5,000 would, therefore, buy 250 mares a year.

2nd.—When purchased these mares should be distributed through Ireland, and should be lent by the Royal Dublin Society to farmers selected by Local Committees in each county upon the following terms:—

(*a.*) That they should be served by sires chosen by these Local Committees.

(*b.*) That these sires should be thoroughbred and sound, and each farmer should pay for the service of the sire chosen.

(*c.*) That the progeny of the mare should be the sole property of the farmer.

(*d.*) That the farmers may work the mares on their farms, but must undertake to exhibit them once a year to the Local Committee.

(*e.*) That these Committees should have the power to take the mares from any farmers not treating them properly, and transfer them to other farmers upon the same terms."

and then he goes on:—

"It may be assumed that these mares would be serviceable for breeding purposes for an average of least eight years, and, therefore, by adopting this plan the Royal Dublin Society, instead of parting with £5,000 per annum, as at present, would in these eight years accumulate a stud of 2,000 well chosen mares under their own control, and certain to produce colts of a far better class than the average now bred in Ireland."

I think there is a great deal in that worth favourable consideration.

4558. It has been suggested by a witness here that the Government should distribute cast Artillery mares to the farmers for breeding purposes, would you

approve of that idea?—Provided they were only cast for accident.

4559. Have you any experience in buying remounts?—No, I know nothing about them.

4560. I suppose a certain number of troopers are bought round about Midleton?—Oh, yes, no doubt. I think it would be a great advantage if the military authorities were brought more into contact with the farmers, but I have not thought out any scheme.

4561. You would suggest the troopers should be bought direct from the farmers, and, if possible, do away with the middlemen?—If possible, I think it would be very desirable. With reference to Hackney sires I might mention that I cordially agree with Mr. Longfield and Mr. Barry on that subject; there is a very strong feeling in the county of Cork that they would tend to deteriorate the breed very much; I have no personal experience myself, but I have talked over the matter with men who understand horse-breeding, and the various classes of horses that are suitable for the English market, and they all agree that Hackney sires would not be suited certainly for the county of Cork, because we are in a very favourable position in the greater part of the county to produce a good class of hunters suitable for the English market, and Hackney sires cannot, I think it is admitted, produce that class of hunter.

4562. Do you think that the effect of Hackneys covering in West Cork, Bantry, and Glengarriffe would have any effect on the breeding of horses in Midleton?—I think, as Mr. Longfield said, that in the course of time it doubtless would, but it would not be immediately apparent.

4563. You think some of the blood would sooner or later filter through?—In course of time I am sure it would.

4564. Is there any importation of ponies and small mares from the Glengarriffe side to your more civilized regions?—Not on any large scale. Of course Hackney sires might produce carriage horses, knee action is not required for hunters, it is rather an objection than otherwise, and I think the farmers in the county of Cork would be ill-advised to change from the present system and breed carriage horses; in view of modern inventions I think it would be rather risky, and there is not much chance, as far as present appearances go at any rate, of any machine being invented for crossing country.

4565. Do you approve of the suggestion that stallions should be licensed?—I do, most decidedly, and I think no licence should be given to any stallion that has not been professionally examined and passed sound. I am told that stallions when they go to stud very often go wrong in their wind; that would not be hereditary, but it would be an objection.

4566. I see Admiral Rous, in his examination in 1873, said he thought that every stallion twenty years old was a roarer?—That is rather an extreme assertion that depends on the amount of exercise given to stallions.

4567. Do you think there is a sufficiency of suitable sound stallions about Midleton for the wants of the farmers?—I think that my district is very fairly supplied. I quite agree that private enterprise will always supply that. There are plenty of men with capital and enterprise in Ireland who will always be found to import high-class sires so long as there is a demand for their services. That is why I am in favour of improving the breed of mares.

4568. Are you acquainted with the registered sires under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme about Midleton?—I cannot say that I am.

4569. You think it is an advantage to have sires registered under the Royal Dublin Society?—I quite agree with what Mr. Barry said that every owner of a sound sire would be glad to have him registered, and to have a law to that effect, but of course the owners of unsound stallions would certainly object.

4570. Are the prices for horses generally bred about you keeping up?—As far as I can understand light weight horses have reduced very much in value. A large dealer in the county of Cork told me not long ago that light weight horses have reduced in value as much as 50 per cent. within the last four or five years.

4571. Light weight hunters?—Light weight hunters he was talking of.

4572. Mr. WRENCH.—Reduced how much?—Very nearly 50 per cent. I think what he said was that you would buy as good a light weight horse now for £40 as you would pay £60 or £70 for some years ago; perhaps 40 per cent. would be more like the reduction.

4573. CHAIRMAN.—I am sorry to say I don't find it so?—There is no doubt they have reduced very much in value. I am not talking now of a horse with character; a hunter with character will always sell well, I am talking of the general average.

4574. You mean the light-weight four-year-old?—Yes, I only mean the average light-weight horse; of course character and fashion, and so on, will always sell.

4575. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What sort of fees will the farmers give round you for the services of a stallion; of course they will go to the cheapest, no doubt, but what do they give actually, do you think?—The service fee of the best class thoroughbred stallion is £5 for half-bred mares. I don't think there is anything over that.

4576. A horse standing at that rate would not be likely to get a great many mares, would he, except from gentlemen and well-to-do people?—Up to the last few years I think horses standing at that fee were fairly well patronized; now, I think that owing to prices having reduced, farmers would consider that too high.

4577. The farmer who would give £5 for the service of a stallion would be a man who would keep a mare exclusively for breeding—not work the mare in any way?—I think it is the almost universal custom in the county of Cork to make brood mares pay for their keep; even the large farmers do not keep brood mares for breeding purposes alone, I am of course talking of the general rule.

4578. And yet they will give that fee?—Up to the last few years horses standing at that fee were fairly patronized—now I fancy that would be considered too high.

4579. Mr. CAREW.—You said in that scheme propounded by Mr. Furlong you recommend that the produce of these mares should be the absolute property of the farmer?—Yes.

4580. What do you recommend as to the mares themselves?—The mares were always to remain the property of the Royal Dublin Society, who were to have the power to transfer them in case they thought they were not being properly treated.

4581. They were to be subject to annual inspection?—Yes, and in case of ill-treatment the Royal Dublin Society were to delegate to the local committees the power to transfer the mares to another farmer.

4582. Don't you think that would create a great deal of friction?—Everything would depend on the constitution of the local committee.

4583. Don't you think that the farmer who would take over that mare would be subject to boycotting on the part of the others?—I think it would very seldom be necessary; I think as a rule farmers do not ill-treat their horses; they are fond of horses; and I don't think it would occur, in view of this annual inspection, and I don't see why some system of small prizes should not be adopted at that annual inspection.

4584. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Prizes for good condition, you mean?—Yes.

4585. Mr. CAREW.—You totally disapprove of the introduction of Hackneys?—Yes, for breeding hunters.

4586. Hackneys would only be serviceable for

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breeding harness horses?—I presume so; I have no personal knowledge.

4587. Don't you think a misfit for a hunter would make a good harness horse?—I think the shape and make are very different. I presume you require to breed for knee action for harness horses.

4588. Don't you find the thoroughbred will breed good enough action for harness purposes?—As a rule, I don't think the thoroughbred has a high knee action—showy action.

4589. Well, sufficient action for harness purposes?—Certainly, for safety purposes.

4590. Do you agree with Mr. Barry and Mr. Longfield, that everyone who keeps a stallion should take out a licence?—Yes, certainly.

4591. And that the defects of wind or limb should be shown on the face of the licence?—Yes.

4592. Mr. WRENCH. — With regard to these mares in Mr. Furlong's scheme, I think you said that you would leave the entire control with the local committee. I mean that practically carrying out the scheme would be left with the local committee?—Yes.

4593. Who would have to inspect, and change the mares if necessary?—Yes.

4594. Would you have the local committees elected as at present, or would you give the people who are benefiting by the scheme any voice in the selection?—That is a detail I have not considered.

4595. You have not thought that out?—I have not.

4596. I think you said, with regard to Hackneys, that you thought in time the blood might filter through?—Yes.

4597. And that you considered knee action objectionable?—I think knee action is not required for hunters.

4598. As I understand you, you live in one of the best hunting districts, and you wish to keep the name of the hunters up, and you don't want any other blood?—Yes, that is so.

4599. And I don't know that it has been suggested that you should have any other blood, therefore, if you are breeding hunters you would not choose a mare to breed from that had very high knee action?—I don't know that it would be a very strong objection if she had very good shoulders, shape, and make, and in every other respect was suitable.

4600. You would not mind her having extravagant action?—I think I would run the chance.

4601. And you think that could be corrected by the thoroughbred horse?—Yes, I think so.

4602. Do you think it any drawback for a hunter sire to have extravagant knee action—does it not, to a certain extent, stop galloping power?—I think so.

4603. Therefore, in selecting a hunter sire, as long as he had level, straight action, you would prefer him not to have knee action?—I think he should have sufficient action to travel safely from cover to cover along the road without stumbling; anything beyond that is not necessary.

4604. With regard to harness horses do you think action is a saleable commodity or not?—I am quite sure price is guided to a very large extent by action.

4605. You think a horse with good action is more quickly picked out in a fair than a horse that has not?—Yes, for harness purposes.

4606. Then putting the Hackney aside altogether, and suppose some breed were ascertained to be useful to the people in the very poor districts of Ireland, would you deprive those people of that advantage on account of any imaginary injury to the class that were well able to take care of themselves?—I cannot speak of the congested districts, or very poor districts, in Ireland, but I imagine a good class of pony ought to suit.

4607. I am only saying supposing they had been tried, and it was found a certain class of animals suited best, don't you think the people who breed hunters in your district are very well able to look after the class of mares they breed from?—You are referring to other parts of the county of Cork.

4608. I am referring to Midleton, these people would not be likely to bring mares from Bantry or Castletown-Bere or other parts to breed hunters from in Midleton?—I think, of course, there might be an exceptional case in which mares might, but as a general rule I think not. But there is a very strong feeling in the whole county of Cork against the introduction of Hackney sires.

4609. When you say the whole county do you include the congested districts?—I think I do. Mr. Longfield referred to the resolution of the County Cork Agricultural Society—a resolution was also passed by the County Grand Jury at the last Spring Assizes—unanimously protesting against the introduction of the breed of Hackneys.

4610. You don't know that as a matter of fact we had a thoroughbred standing in one of the congested districts, and we were asked to send back the Hackney next year?—In West Cork?

4611. Yes?—No; I was not aware of that.

4612. Personally you have no experience of Hackneys?—I have no experience of Hackneys at all. The proposer and seconder of this resolution are men of considerable experience in horse-breeding.

4613. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Wrench asked you if some particular horse was most suited to the peasants in the congested districts whether you would deprive them of the use of that horse for fear of some possible injury to a hunter-producing district, don't you consider that hunter-breeding is much more valuable than the horse-breeding interests of the congested districts of Cork?—Certainly, and I might go so far as to say throughout Ireland. Of course, I am only speaking for the county of Cork, but Ireland is the great nursery for hunters for the English market.

4614. Mr. CAREW.—In view of these new modes of conveyance, the value of the hunter is not likely to be impaired?—I think it will hold its own.

4615. CHAIRMAN.—From your knowledge of the congested districts—have you been in West Cork at all?—Simply visiting; I cannot speak as to the conditions of horse-breeding there at all.

4616. But you have met the inhabitants, and do you think they possess sufficient intelligence to be able to tell what sort of horse is best adapted to their needs?—I think myself the welfare of the community should be considered in this matter before any particular district.

4617. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said the hunter-breeding interest was more valuable. Can you say at all the amount of the valuation of the men who breed hunters in your district. What class of farmers?—In East Cork we have not a very large proportion of very small farmers, and I think as a rule the small farmers of my district very frequently endeavour to breed a hunter themselves, even the smallest one.

4618. You don't quite agree with some of the witnesses who told us that the horses that gave Ireland the name it has as a horse-breeding country were bred by the gentry and men of over £200 valuation?—I do not; many small farmers frequently breed a horse that turns out a good hunter.

4619. That is in your district?—Yes.

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4620. The CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Queen's county?—Yes.

4621. You have had considerable experience in horse breeding?—I have been at it about twenty years. I have had both thoroughbred horses, Norfolk trotters, a Hackney sire, a Suffolk Punch, and a Shire horse, from time to time.

4622. Have you got any stallions now?—I have Almoner, Golden Crescent, going to the stud next year, and a trotting horse. I believe he is in the Hackney Stud Book. Humphrey Clinker is his name.

4623. Is he a Yorkshire or Norfolk Hackney?—He is in the Hackney Stud Book; he is an old horse, and is by a horse called "Stepping Stone." I bought him from Arnold at the Glasgow Stud.

4624. What horses do you breed yourself personally?—I breed from thoroughbred horses only.

4625. What horses are generally bred in your district?—At the present time it is very hard to tell what they breed from. They go very often to the cheapest and nearest horse, and if, as they say in the country, a knowledgeable man goes to a certain horse the whole townland will follow him.

4626. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What is a knowledgeable man?—That is a man who is a bit cute, or has a bit of luck in selling horses. If such a man goes to a certain stallion, all his neighbours will go after him irrespective of anything else. Of course the horse must be cheap.

4627. CHAIRMAN.—Are there good mares in your district?—No; the mares have I think gone from bad to worse even, for the last few years. In fact the small farmers cannot afford to keep a good mare. If they have a good mare they will sell her. They can get no price for a bad mare and they breed from her. They are going from bad to worse, unsound, and everything else.

4628. You think the mares are deteriorating in consequence of the want of money on the part of the farmers?—Yes; I do.

4629. Do you think that farmers appreciate the value of a good sire?—I am sure they would. Any of the farmers that I know are fairly well off and they always send to a good thoroughbred horse; but very few of them have really good mares. When I had "Pride of Prussia," he always got from fifty to seventy half-bred mares every year, and he did a lot of good to the farmers round about; they got from £50 to £70 for the produce as three-year-olds.

4630. Do you think the farmers are generally influenced by the excellence of the horse or by the amount of the service fee?—Some of them are influenced by his reputation on the turf; some are influenced by their friends; and a good many of them will send their mares to a horse and they will never pay you

4631. They don't pay at all?—Not at all.

4632. Then it does not matter what the fee is?—Oh! no; they would rather send their mares as a compliment to you; that is my experience.

4633. Are there many sires in your neighbourhood that you consider suitable to put to the mares of the farmers?—Well, there are a few—some fairly good thoroughbred sires. I think the curse of Ireland is some of those half-bred sires. Half of what they call half-bred sires are made up with bogus pedigrees.

4634. You don't approve of half-breeds?—No, sir; because they are not really half-bred. They may be got by a thoroughbred horse, and if he happens to turn out a good-looking colt they won't cut him but will say he is by ——, for instance; a good many are said to have been got by "Pride of Prussia," and I can swear the mares never came to the horse.

4635. Would you approve of breeding from half-bred horses really got by "Pride of Prussia?"—I would like to have the dam at least three-fourths bred besides; that is, you should go back as far as the great grandsire.

4636. And that the grandsire and the great grandsire should be thoroughbred?—Should be thoroughbred. If they were got by what they call the old Irish horse they would make good hunters.

4637. What do you mean by the old Irish horse?—I could not exactly describe the blood. There was one in our country for some time, a great horse called "Sir Henry," who got very saleable horses. He was what they call the old Irish draught horse—very light, without much hair on his legs, with really good bone, about 15.3 high. He got very saleable horses, as far as troopers were concerned, and he got some hunters that could always be sold.

4638. Have you any idea how he was bred?—I have not. His name was "Sir Henry;" I know the man that had him for years, his name is Dalton.

4639. Do you know the horse himself?—I often saw the horse and his produce. He is dead now.

4640. What impression did his appearance give you?—He gave the idea of being even a bit more than half-bred. He had no leggy hair and did not display any of the characteristics of the draught horse at all. He had good action, got very good troopers and very good harness horses, and a few hunters.

4641. You think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has been beneficial in your part of Ireland?—It has been beneficial in this way. The more enlightened people always like to know if the thoroughbred sire is sound, and it is a good thing to have a certificate of his soundness.

4642. You approve of registration?—Yes, I do.

4643. Do you think sufficient care has been exercised in selecting really suitable horses for registration?—I think so. In the Queen's county there were only four that are registered, and I think one of them, even, "Belgrave" is dead.

4644. Such horses as you know that are registered are in your opinion suitable horses?—They are, to get really good hunters or high class harness horses, because if they don't breed a hunter you can turn back and sell it as a harness horse.

4645. What is your opinion as regards the prices of horses bred in your district?—The prices have at the very least dropped forty per cent. on all sorts of horses, as far as I know.

4646. What class of horses has been particularly affected by the depreciation of value?—I think it is most in the trooper and in the light harness horses, in the light hunters. Even the common horses that the farmers now breed because they can sell them at one year and one and a half years old, and so have not to keep them—even these, that would fetch £12 or £13, two years ago, would not get more than £7 now.

4647. Who buys them?—They are all bought by the Northerns, who come down to Kilkenny to purchase. Nearly all these horses go up North, but I don't know for what purpose.

4648. Do they breed as many horses in your district now as they used to?—I don't think so.

4649. What do you attribute that to?—To bad prices. I did not put any of my half-bred mares to a horse at all this last season.

4650. Are there many half-bred stallions in your part of the Queen's county?—There are.

4651. You don't like them?—I do not.

4652. You don't see any of them of the same class as "Sir Henry?"—No, they are not. Most of them are said to be got by "Heart of Oak," "Pride of Prussia," or by "Roman Bee." They may or they may not be; the pedigrees they can make themselves, and this they often do, I know.

4653. You don't think they are suitable horses to improve the breed in your district?—No, I don't.

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4654. Do you approve of the idea of registration and license of stallions?—Well, I don't see how it is to be managed but I am sure it would be a very good idea, of course a registered sire now would hardly require a licence—he has been passed; but otherwise it would be a very good thing if they had to pay so much for a certificate of soundness that they could show to anyone that would come to look at a horse with the object of giving him to a mare.

4655. It has been suggested to us that a sort of penal licence fee should be charged to unsound stallions?—I think it would be better to give them a bonus and have them destroyed.

4656. Are there any suggestions you would like to make as to the improvement of the mares?—I have been asking some old men that used to breed very good hunters, what in their opinion were the best class of mares they ever bred, and they said they never had as good brood mares as in the time that Bianconi's mail cars used to run. They said they used to get the cast-off mares from the cars when they would be too old for work, and breed from them; and they said they used to breed the best hunters, and that their daughters were good hunter producers to. Of course except a farmer is well off he cannot afford to keep a good mare to breed from. If he is offered £50 or £60 for a four-year-old mare he will certainly dispose of her, but of course if he has one he does not like to take a bad price for, he will send her as the result to a bad sire or a cheap one, and the produce getting worse every year.

4657. But unfortunately we cannot go back to the days of Bianconi's cars?—No. I asked these old men how did they think these animals were bred, that, of course, they were not able really to tell, but they thought they were by thoroughbred horses. That is a good many years ago.

4658. Have you any suggestions you would like to make as to the best means of improving the mares at the present day?—I think that would be very hard to tell now. This scheme about giving the cast horses from the artillery and army to farmers is a queer thing to look at. Many of them might have been brought in the same district that the sire would stand in, and the risk would be run of the daughters going back to the father, which would make things worse. Remember, many of them don't know how the animals are bred. As to giving £20 for a good-looking mare that a man has been hunting for four or five years and broken down, they could be bought for a lot less. That is my experience. I am certain you could.

4659. Would you approve of that suggestion that was put before us by Captain Donellan?—It is a very good idea, but just what some gentlemen said it would be, very hard to prevent a lot of jealousy in the distribution of the mares in certain places. One man might be better off than another, and you could not say, "You are a well-enough-off man, and we will give this mare to another man who is not so well off." The man who was well off would say, "I can do the mare better. I can send her a good horse and feed the foal better." It is very seldom that the foals in the country of any sort are well fed.

4660. You don't think the farmers take sufficient care of their young stock?—I dare say you have an experience of it yourself. If a man has a good farm and bad bottoms on it, the bullocks will go on the best land and the horses on the bad place.

4661. Do you think if there was a distribution of mares such as Captain Donellan spoke of, the farmers would be anxious to obtain them?—I am sure they would. A good many would be very anxious because they have a love of breeding. If it were put in their way to send to a good sire, with a little inducement as to a prize afterwards, it would help to improve the breed altogether.

4662. What sort of horse do the farmers in the Queen's county like to breed as a rule?—Till the last three years they used to go to the thoroughbred horse nearly altogether—at least I mean in my own immediate district; but lately they have taken to going to the common horses again, or half-bred horses.

4663. Why?—Because they can sell the produce easier. They cannot sell a well-bred animal that is only one and a half years old if they take them to a fair; but if they take a one and a half year old "hairy legs," as they call them, to a fair, they *can* sell them, though the prices will be bad.

4664. Your experience is that the hairy-legged one looks better in its youth than the well-bred one?—Yes; and it does not require the care a well-bred one does.

4665. Have you any experience of breeding from Hackney sires?—Except this horse that I have, "Humphrey Clinker."

4666. How long have you him?—I have him six years; I have bred from him.

4667. Is there much of his stock about your neighbourhood?—No; there are some, but not many. He did not go down with the people some way or other. I don't know the reason why. He has fine action: he didn't take at all. The other horse, a Norfolk trotter, at least my father bought him in Norfolk, did very well for three or four years as far as his getting mares was concerned, but then his produce did not turn out well. They were very narrow, and the most of them unsound.

4668. And the produce of your present horse—did they sell well?—No; he didn't turn out well either.

4669. "Pride of Prussia," of course, was an exceptionally good stallion?—Well, he came with such a good name that he got plenty of good mares. I only gave him the best mares, and of course the people got good prices for them. In fact in the Queen's County there are not ten "Pride of Prussia" mares. I have not one myself.

4670. What breed of stallion do you think is best adapted for your part of Queen's county?—I would say a thoroughbred horse—decidedly, because there is a lot of limestone land in the Queen's County, and this is adapted for rearing young horses. We have no hounds in the county now—it is a great loss. We have not even a pack of harriers.

4671. But still I conclude that the hunter dealers go into the county?—Yes; because most of the Queen's County fellows that are near go to Kilkenny to hunt. It has always been more or less famed for good hunters.

4672. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—Do you think that the jealousy you talk of about these cast-off hunting mares may not be obviated in some way or other by selling the mares by auction confined to a district? Do you think that something of that kind might be done?—Not except you distribute the mares to farmers under a certain valuation, and over a certain valuation, and then allow so many to a district. Let the committee pick out so many and then they would have to draw lots for the mare, and one would have it only for one or two years. Then there could not be any jealousy: that is the only way I see to avoid it. I know plenty of farmers in the district I live in who would be very glad to keep a good mare like that, and work her and mind her. Of course it does not do a brood mare any harm so far as harrowing or ploughing goes, but it does to cart them—it is a risk to an unborn foal.

4673. Do you object to half-bred horses?—I do, as a sire.

4674. You object to them mainly because you cannot rely on their pedigree?—No, you can't, indeed.

4675. Should you object to them if their pedigree was able to be guaranteed?—I would not object to them if they could go back at least four generations; because there is many a good steeplechase horse that is not thoroughbred—he is not in the Stud Book—but he may be nearly thoroughbred, and he should get good hunters.

4676. And there were a good many more of these a few years ago than there are now?—I have a mare at the stud, she is gone home now, "Eileen Aroon," who won lots of steeplechases: she has fine bone and everything else. I leased her for three years: she had three foals, she is the same way bred as "Lochinvar." In the west a half-bred horse at that time with the object of claiming a 7 lb. allowance at races for half-bred horses they didn't mind getting them registered in the stud book.

4677. CHAIRMAN.—Can you trace "Eileen Aroon's" pedigree?—About four generations.

4678. She was of the same blood as "Lochinvar"?—She was in the same way bred as "Lochinvar," by "Bar One," out of "Eileen Oge," by "Heapy" out of something by "Small Hopes." That is as far as I can go; that is as far as Mr. Brindley could get it; the stain comes in then. But I asked Mr. Coghlan that owned this mare, and he said it was a general rule down there not to get their horses in the stud book as in lots of their local races they could claim 7lbs. for being half-bred.

4679. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do they do that now?—There is no such thing allowed now.

4680. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—You say the prices have dropped very considerably in the last two or three years?—Yes.

4681. Do you think they have dropped equally in the very high-class hunters and harness horses?—No, not in a good weight-carrying hunter.

4682. And in the harness horses?—The harness horses I have not much experience about.

4683. Do you think a really good thoroughbred horse with sufficient bone and action can get as good formed and good actioned a harness horse or light draught horse as any other stallion of any other breed?—I think so, decidedly.

4684. Therefore a lot of these horses that do not come up quite to the idea of the high-class hunter are very capable of making high-class harness horses?—They are.

4685. And there is a great demand for these in the market?—Yes.

4686. Do you think the price of them has dropped?—I have no experience of that. I have never sold one.

4687. You have no personal experience, but round about in the breeding country are not a lot of horses sold to the dealers as high-clas harness horses, not as hunters?—I don't know anything about that at all.

4688. With regard to the old mares going from the service and other sources to the farmers, what is the least age you think a mare should be given to the farmers at to breed from?—I have known very good hunters to be sold out of mares that were put to the stud at two years at the outside. *Nov. 25, 1896.* Mr. R N. Talbot.

4689. You don't quite understand me. What is the greatest age that you would hand over a mare to the farmer at. Say sixteen years of age?—No, I would say twelve years of age.

4690. You see the difficulty of course with the Government horses is that except through vice or some disease they don't leave the service until they are sixteen years of age. Would you consider that too old?—Too old, in this way. Very probably the mare would miss the first year she would be put to a stallion. Any animal fed in the service on corn would want to be fed on grass.

4691. There is not sufficient life in her to induce the farmer to take her on these terms?—To work and feed. Of course she might breed the next year, and it is not certain they would not breed the first year.

4692. Mr. WRENCH.—Your only experience about Hackneys is with regard to these two horses you and your father have had?—That is all.

4693. One was a Norfolk trotter?—Bought of Grants, Wood Bridge, Norfolk.

4694. The other Humphrey Clinker?—Yes.

4695. He does not appear to be in the Hackney stud book?—I haven't a Hackney stud book. I don't know whether he was in it or not. I have his pedigree. He was sold to me with his pedigree, and sound.

4696. He is an old horse?—A very old horse now, he is eighteen or twenty years.

4697. CHAIRMAN.—Are there any observations you would like to make on the subject of improved breeding?—I have nothing else to say.

4698. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Can you suggest anything with a view to inducing farmers to keep their mares?—Not in the present state of depression of everything in Ireland. As a farmer, I know that everything has gone down, as far as horses, cattle, sheep, corn, and everything else is concerned. With many of the farmers when the landlord calls for the rent they have no other chance perhaps but to sell the horse if they have a good one and they are very glad to have it to sell.

Mr. WILLIAM DUNNE, Ballymanus, Queen's County, examined. Mr. William Dunne.

4699. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Queen's County, and have taken an active part in horse-breeding for a great many years?—Yes.

4700. What class of horse do you principally breed?—Thoroughbreds and half-breds.

4701. You have bred half-bred horses?—Yes, until within the last four or five years. I always bred a good number of half-breds. I always kept three or four mares working on my farm, and I always bred from thoroughbred horses.

4702. You always used a thoroughbred sire?—Always.

4703. Were these mares you put to these sires got by thoroughbred horses?—There were some. Every half-bred mare I had in the world descended from an old Irish mare belonging to my father. She herself I never had anything to say to, but they were all out of her, got by horses in the country, most of them, as well as my father could get them, and in my time later on there was a very good Irish horse in the country, a real cut of an old Irish horse. A number of them were got that way, and others of them were got by horses with a touch of the Clydesdale.

4704. How do you define an Irish horse—every horse born in Ireland?—I don't; clean in the legs, good-looking, strong, low, and short legged. You see a lot of them in the County Waterford without any hairy heels. I can't define them better.

4705. How were they bred?—I haven't the remotest idea.

4706. Mr. CAREW.—There is thoroughbred blood in them, you think?—It would be mere guessing what I would say about it. I have no way of defining them at all. I have always looked upon them as an old Irish breed of horse, just as I have a certain class of cattle that I look on as old Irish blood. I can't tell you why, and I have never heard any explanation of it.

4707. CHAIRMAN.—Do the farmers in your neighbourhood breed a great many horses?—They did do so, but they are dropping out of it, and with all respect to you, gentlemen, I think the Commission is upon the wrong lines, as to suggestions for improving the breed. What we want a Commission for is to tell us how to improve the prices of horses in Ireland. If breeding has declined it is not because the blood is not there, but because there is nothing for the horses.

4708. Mr. CAREW.—Don't you think prices would follow the breeding?—I don't; I think the breeding

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has not gone off. I think there are as many good horses bred in Ireland as ever there were.

4709. CHAIRMAN.—You think the horses have not deteriorated, but that the value has depreciated?—I am perfectly certain of it. I don't know whether this may be connected with this inquiry or not, but if you will allow me I will tell you what I think are the prices of horses now in comparison with what they were ten or fifteen years ago. There are three fairs round me, and they are typical Irish fairs. They are held at Rathsallagh, Frenchfurze, and Castledermot. I am perfectly certain that in those three fairs this year there were not ten three-year-old horses sold for £40 each, and I think I am over it a good deal in saying there were not ten. I don't think any three-year-old, unless there is something remarkable about him, is worth £40 in the public market now. Fifteen years ago I saw £90 offered for a three-year-old in Rathsallagh one day; and I am perfectly certain that the fall is in the price of the horse and not in the value of the animal. If the best three-year-old in a fair is not worth £40, what can the average three-year-old be worth? Certainly, I would say not £20. This is what we farmers are asked to go on breeding horses for, and when we have them bred there is no market for the ordinary horse. Consequently I myself and a good number of other men are dropping out of breeding. It is better for me and others to go to the fair and buy a horse if we want it than to breed it.

4710. What do you attribute the falling to, to lack of quality?—I don't think so; I can get as good a three-year-old horse now as I have ever done.

4711. That is, you can get as good a horse for £40 now as you should pay £90 for some years ago?—Yes.

4712. Mr. CAREW.—That is, the cream of the three-year-olds?—Yes. More than that, you will now get a 12 stone hunter for 50 or 60 guineas as well as any that you paid £120 for some time ago. Widger told me that. He told it to me in explanation in a conversation we had when I was remonstrating with him on the price he was offering me for a horse. I am quite sure of that myself, for my own experience is the same.

4713. CHAIRMAN.—You are quite sure it is not owing to any deterioration in the horses themselves? No; I don't think it is. There are as many good horses in the country as ever; there may be more bad ones. I don't think that in my county this present scheme of the Royal Dublin Society has done any use.

4714. What class of horses do you think your part of the Queen's County is best adapted to breeding?—Thoroughbreds.

4715. Clean thoroughbreds?—Yes.

4716. You would not suggest that the farmers should breed clean thoroughbreds?—I mean sires. Will you ask the question again.

4717. What class of horses do you think your part of the country is best adapted to produce?—Hunters. I have never known them do anything else. Any fellow who thinks at all of what he is going to breed from has a hunter. I know nothing at all about harness horses. I never saw a harness horse buyer in my country.

4718. In attempting to breed hunters they very often breed something that is not a hunter?—That is particularly so just now. There is a horse that is getting rather good stock, I noticed them in the show the other day in Maryboro'; his produce looked to me more like harness horses than hunters and the sire is the only creditable registered sire in the country.

4719. Is it a thoroughbred sire?—Yes; "Early Bird."

4720. Do you think that the mares that the farmers use have deteriorated, to your knowledge?—I heard you ask that question of one or two of the other witnesses. As a matter of fact until these mare shows were held, as far as I myself was concerned I did not know, and I think that hardly anyone else had an opportunity of knowing, the mares in the country. Until these mare shows of the last four or five years, I never saw all these mares. I saw them gathered together at the last summer show, and I say that it was the best. This year I was asked to judge in Longford. I never saw as good a class of mare in my country as in Longford. As far as judging goes, I don't think myself that any man can say what is a good brood mare until he sees its produce.

4721. What?—Until they see their produce. The only really certain good brood mare I ever had of my own was a mare that if she were entered in a show would be hurled out of the ring with the first lot when the judging was on in her class. She would not sell for more than £10 I think, but I never sold a colt out of her for less than £200 at four-year-old.

4722. Do you mean that she would not get a prize in a show?—I say if she was the only one in her class you would not give a prize to her for want of merit.

4723. Mr. WRENCH.—How was she bred?—I bred her myself, by a stallion that had a good deal of Clydesdale in him out of an old Irish mare.

4724. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any suggestions as to improving the mares?—They are not of a very high standard. I have not; but I have this suggestion to make, and in that I think I will disagree with almost all the witnesses here. The only way you can improve the breed of horses is to go to the sires. In the latter scheme that the Royal Dublin Society are now working under, one of the rules is that no prize can be over £5. The prize to the sire has been done away with. You can hardly imagine, or I can't imagine any man keeping a mare for the purpose of, or buying a mare for the purpose of, taking a chance of getting a prize at some future time of £5 and no more. That is a present what you are doing. Under this system also a man may get a prize out of this mare when the foal is about two years old; and the prize he may get is £3. I am thoroughly convinced that at present, in my county at least, there is not a mare more put to the stud than there would be if the Royal Society did not give a shilling of this money.

4725. You don't think this scheme had the effect of inducing farmers to keep their good mares?—I am perfectly certain it didn't. All the Royal Dublin Society is doing now is giving a man a chance of £5. I know of my own knowledge of lots of men who had intended sending in mares to the shows in the Queen's County, and merely because it was a fine day and a good day for working on the farm, they didn't send in the mare on a chance of getting £3 by doing so, and I think they were quite right.

4726. They would not lose their day's work?—They would not lose their day's work. I am very strongly of opinion that there is not an extra mare in the Queen's County sent to a sire more than there would be if there were none of this money of the Royal Dublin Society going.

4727. Do you think that the farmers have got a sufficiency of suitable sires?—No, that is exactly what they have not got. I see a friend of mine here, and I would be very sorry to say anything hurtful to any of his sires, but I can't help it really. The sires in the Queen's County last year, were "Almoner," "Bel Demonio," covering at thirteen guineas, "Earlscope," "Early Bird," "Orontes," at ten guineas, "St. David," at thirteen guineas. These were, I think, put in here (referring to a document) as an advertisement. I know "St. David" and "Bel Demonio" would not serve half-bred mares—I expect Mr. Blake put them in as an advertisement for his sire and a very good advertisement. That leaves three other horses. "Almoner" has got race horses, but I don't think he has size to get hunters nor either do I think that either of the others are much. In that way I think we are wretchedly served with sires. I would almost say that unless

there was something superlatively good in the mares I don't think they could get very high class produce. It is rather serious to talk of all these horses belonging to friends of my own, but a man must say what he thinks.

4728. Do you suggest that the sires should be subsidised?—I do, and I can speak on that with a certain amount of experience. It so happened that I was asked to go and judge at the first show of premium sires in England at Newcastle, and a wretcheder lot of beasts I never saw in a show-yard. I never was more disgusted in my life than I was with that lot. Six or seven years afterwards I was asked to go again to another show, I think one held at Islington, and I was amazed at the class of horses that were in it. I never saw a finer lot of horses in my life in a show-yard, even putting the Royal Dublin Society in. I never saw so good a class, speaking of it as a class, in Ball's-bridge as I saw on that day.

4729. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Was that the class for premium sires?—Yes, the premium sires. I asked Captain Fife "How do you account for this wonderful improvement?" "Well," he said, "it is worth our while you know now. We are getting £200 a year for these horses now, and we can afford to go and buy them." There is another man I know very well—Dr Hazlewood, of Buxton. I have to go to Buxton now and then, and he has rather a fad about horses. When we made each other out when I first went there, and he asked me to look at his stud. He had two or three wretched beasts. Later on when I went there again he had five excellent horses. I was one of the judges who gave three of them £200 each at Islington. He said to me:—"It is a real good game now. I can afford to go and buy horses. I can give £400 for a horse now, and I can send him out, and it pays me well if he only lives two or three years." They have stuck to this one scheme from the beginning in England, and in my opinion it has done an immensity of good in the shires. It has done that in the sires, and good sires must produce better foals than bad ones.

4730. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—There is not a great number of them?—There is not one extra one in Ireland. Do away with the whole of the Dublin Society's Scheme, and you won't do away with a sire in Ireland, nor in my opinion will there be a single brood mare the less. With the quantity of money you have, you can't divide it over the mares at all. You have one taproot upon one side you can give it all to; on the other side you must divide it amongst fifty or sixty mares, and that brings it down to nothing. When this scheme was going on in Ireland I knew a man who went to England and bought a good horse on the chance of his getting £200 a year in this country from the Royal Dublin Society. He paid a good price for that horse, but then the next year the Royal Dublin Society changed their rules, and ran another scheme for a year, and then changed that to another scheme, and they seem to be changing it from year to year. I think they are chucking their money away.

4731. You approve of the idea of registering sound stallions?—I heard you ask that of each witness; is it possible that you mean that every man who has a stallion in Ireland must register it.

4732. As far as the Royal Dublin Society is concerned?—Yes.

4733. You do approve as far as the Society is concerned?—Yes

4734. There is also a suggestion that all stallions should be licensed?—That is a most drastic idea—unless they are sound they won't be licensed, they will be driven out of the country, in fact.

4735. The suggestion is that a heavy fee at any rate should be placed upon such horses as are not certified to be sound and suitable?—But does that apply to thoroughbred stallions covering thoroughbred mares? According to that you know "Ormond," if he came to this country, would be hurled out.

4736. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—It need not apply to any horses except those covering under a certain fee?—I think it would be interfering; it would be very strong coercion.

4737. Mr. CAREW.—"Ormond" was sold out of the country on account of the unsoundness?—The horse I am thinking of is a horse that is covering in Ireland at the highest fee for the past two years. I think this would be a very strong coercive measure.

4738. CHAIRMAN.—Would you approve of it?—I could not say I would.

4739. Then the improvement you would suggest to the Royal Dublin Society is to revert to their original scheme?—Yes, and then stick to it.

4740. You would approve of the subsidisation of sires?—Yes; and we passed a resolution to that effect at our county meeting this year.

4741. You would only subsidise thoroughbred sires?—Certainly; I would only subsidise thoroughbred sires; I would draw the line hard and fast Mr. Fitzwilliam asked a question about half-breds that were almost thoroughbreds. Of course I look upon "Mayboy" as a thoroughbred horse. It so happened my father was one of the stewards who acted in the "Doch-an-Durrus" case which disqualified him from the stud books, but it was really that very thing that Mr. Talbot said about the seven pound allowance caused him to be disqualified. There was a horse called "Lawyer," one of the finest horses I ever saw, a useful horse, and an animal that won a great number of Queen's Plates, and could carry 14 stone to hounds. I believe that he was really a cocktail.

4742. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—He was bred by Sir Tatton Sykes, if I remember aright. In the same sort of way the seven pound allowance had a great deal to do with a great number of horses then bred on the East Riding of Yorkshire?—He was a most awful failure as a sire of half-bred stock. I sent him a lot of mares, and I never got anything worth a fig from him He covered in Kildare for two or three years.

4743. I didn't think he ever covered in Kildare?—He did, at Waters'. I had three or four horses by him. I forgot that he went to Earl Fitzwilliam afterwards.

4744. He was in Wexford afterwards, but he didn't come to us.—In my country he was a total failure.

4745. CHAIRMAN.—"Hotspur," of course, was a horse not in the stud book?—I don't know anything about him.

4746. You would suggest that the Royal Dublin Society only recognise thoroughbred horses?—Yes.

4747. You agree with Admiral Rous that the thoroughbred horse is the best horse in the world?—I believe that the thoroughbred animal of any sort is. As a farmer, I have very strong ideas that it is almost impossible to breed from a half-bred of any sort—pigs, cattle, dogs, or anything. You may breed in the first cross, but if you try the second it is not satisfactory. We know the cross between the setter and the pointer, a dropper; they are very excellent animals, but if you attempted to breed from them you could not make head or tail of them. It is the same with pigs and cattle—Polled Angus or shorthorns. If you attempt to go the second time you get most extraordinary animals, no two alike.

4748. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I think what you say about the second cross is almost universally acknowledged?—Well, you see it will be a second cross if you breed from a half-bred horse with a half-bred mare. With half-bred mares the number of unsound foals will be twice as great in percentage as when breeding either from Clydesdales or thoroughbreds.

4749. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think that the thoroughbred horse has improved in excellence during your memory?—I don't know. I never thought of that. I don't think they are. I don't think I ever saw a finer horse than General Peel, or Blair Athol, or some of the horses of those days, and I suppose

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when we were younger we thought more of the horses we saw then.

4750. Admiral Rous said that the thoroughbred horse increases an inch in stature in every twenty-five years, and that, in fact, the average height of a thoroughbred horse is a hand higher than it was 100 years ago?—I don't know about 100 years ago, but I don't think he is anything higher than he was twenty-five years ago. I am quite sure he is not.

4751. He said then in 1873 that the average height of a thoroughbred was a hand higher than it was 100 years before?—I saw just as many big horses twenty-five years ago as I see now.

4752. Do you think thoroughbred horses are more unsound than they used to be?—I think they are in England, not in Ireland.

4753. Do you think there is any other breed of horse that would remain as sound if submitted to the same tests as the thoroughbred horse is submitted to?—I don't think so.

4754. Therefore you consider that a particularly sound breed?—Much the soundest of any one single breed that I know of. I don't know anything at all of these Norfolk trotters we hear so much about; but as for Clydesdales and all that sort of animal, I am sure that the thoroughbred is the soundest; if people took the ordinary care of not breeding from unsound ones.

4755. Admiral Rous says "The stature of the thoroughbred horse has increased since the year 1700 an inch every twenty-five years, and whereas the average size of a horse then was 13.3 hands, the average is now 15.2 hands, and that in carrying power they can carry twice as much weight as they could 100 years ago"?—What age is the horse that the average size of is 15.2?

4756. He does not say?—Certainly the average height of a full grown horse is bigger than that now.

4758. Mr. CAREW.—In the licensing scheme that every horse should be licensed it is not at all suggested that horses such as you describe should be rejected. It is suggested that the object of a licence is that the defects from which a horse might be suffering should appear on the face of the licence, and let the farmers have the option of going to that animal or not, as they like?—What will be the effect if the horse is not licensed.

4759. He will not be licensed for shape and make; it would get rid of the bad horse we want to weed out?—Is it he may or he must be licensed?

4760. It is that every one who owns a sire must get a licence?—Yes, but if he does not get a licence.

4761. That shows he is too bad a horse to breed from, that is, as regards shape or make?—But that is what you are doing now. You are registering horses now but that is all you propose doing under this scheme as well as I understand it. You will register any one that asks to get his horse registered: if he does not it is his own look out. For instance, now, by far the best horse in the Queen's County is an unregistered horse "Philammon." I have sent a lot of mares to him this year because he is there. What is your scheme?

4762. To attack the mongrel breeds going about the country?—But your scheme won't do that.

4763. In this way, if so much is charged for a licence a great many would not keep horses?—But you are penalising the good horses.

4764. Not the good ones, I should say?—But the good ones won't take out a licence.

4765. The owner of a good horse would only be too willing to take out a licence because the bad ones will be got rid of?—Why should you ask him to do so. You are doing the reverse of my scheme. I was for giving a sire £200 and you want to make him pay something.

4766. No, in the first place you would want a committee to select the proper style of horse according to the shape and make; even if that horse is suffering from any potent defects, it should be stated so on the face of the licence. The farmers should have an opportunity of seeing that, and of going if he liked to that horse?—But then you are not going to charge the sire owner for that. That would be terrible.

4767. What would you suggest as a remedy for the evil that undoubtedly exists of bad shaped sires in the country?—Put good ones at a low fee to serve sound mares. I am perfectly certain of that. Let them be Dublin Society sires.

4768. But if the Dublin Society suggest any improvement of any value they should stick to it?—I am very strongly of that opinion.

4769. And they should increase the premium?—If they could. I think if they could give one good sire in every two counties besides what are in them. They have done nothing in my opinion up to the present. The money that was given to my county is absolutely in my opinion thrown away, and if they gave us a sire at a cheap rate, or say a sire between us and Carlow, it won't be much good, but it will be more than we are getting.

4770. You said when breeding half-bred with half-bred there is generally bad produce?—It is ten to one that it would be unsound. I would not breed from a half-bred horse on any terms; they are mongrel.

4771. How would you propose to maintain the size and substance of the mares?—Put a good thoroughbred sire with a good well boned mare.

4772. But how will that mare be bred. Would she be a thoroughbred?—My own experience with mares is that no man knows a good mare until he sees the produce either in thoroughbreds or half-breds.

4773. Mr. WRENCH.—Did you hear it argued this morning that if the Dublin Society were to give prizes up to £20 for mares that would keep the good mares in the country. Do you think that is a practical scheme at all?—No, I don't. First of all, they could not do it to any extent, and then a person must always look at it in this light. In their own view a farmer is not going to keep a mare on the chance of getting £20. He may get it one year; if he has a superlative mare he would get it every year, unless you prevent him getting it the second year, by a rule to that effect, then he will have his £20, and he will sell the mare, and will say to the foreigner who comes to buy the mare, "That's a grand mare, I want £20 more for her, for she will get first prize this year, she got first prize last year." But if you give the one man the prize year after year, the other fellows won't send in their mares. They will say, "What is the use of sending in against him?"

4774. CHAIRMAN.—Are there any other suggestions you would like to make as to improvement in the breeding of horses?—I really don't think you want to improve the breeding of horses so much as to improve the price of them when they are bred and reared, and the only way to do that I think is for the military authorities to buy yearlings and two-year-olds. If that could be done it would do a lot of good, because it is very hard on a farmer with only thirty or forty acres of land to keep his horse up to four years old, as he must now.

4775. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Why do you put it down to the military authorities? Why would you not say the Government should?—The Government would do it for the military.

4776. The military are only a small amount in the country, and there are certainly not so much funds for them that they can afford to throw much away?—I should think they would be making money by doing it.

4777. It would want a large establishment?—If they bought the yearlings and two year olds and had them properly fed and kept up to four years see what

an improvement there would be in the horses in the army. As a matter of fact, you are now making money by them; you are buying them for less than their rearing costs. But you can't expect us farmers to be such fools as to go on doing this. You can't expect the class of troopers you are now getting for £25 after five or six years.

4778. That is for the Government?—But the Government don't want horses except for the military.

4779. But they are the people who should legislate. As a commercial transaction you would not go into that yourself. You would not set up a big establishment and take the risk of all the animals from yearlings and those eighteen months old up to four year olds?—I think it would be well worth the military authorities while to look forward and make provision. It is all well enough now, but how are we going to get on later on if the Irish farmers leave off breeding horses?

4780. But the British Government can get as many as ever they want?—From abroad, but not here in Ireland.

4781. They can indeed. Have you any idea how many they take in the year?—No.

4782. This year I bought 730 horses up to the present time?—And where do you get all the rest.

4783. I have never bought more than a thousand in the year?—I thought it was a great deal more.

4784. I can get as many as ever I like in the fairs at my price of the highest possible class It is a very, very small item in the export of Ireland?—Yes, if they only get a thousand a year.

4785 It does not affect the breeding of Ireland at all?—No; not much I certainly thought there were more troopers bought.

GEORGE COLLIER, Dingle, examined.

Mr. George Collier.

4786. CHAIRMAN.—You come from Kerry?—Yes.

4787. Are you much interested in horse-breeding?—Yes.

4788. What part of Kerry do you live in?—Dingle.

4789. What class of horses have you bred?—Oh, some from thoroughbreds and some from half-breds.

4790. What class of horse do you find most suitable?—Our horses are used for general work. Very few people keep more than one horse, and he has to do every kind of work. Our mares at present, I think, are in need of more substance; they are almost altogether the produce of very inferior thoroughbreds.

4791. The mares are?—Yes, thoroughbred or half-bred, and the thoroughbreds are very inferior ones.

4792. Were there many thoroughbred stallions standing in the neighbourhood of Dingle?—Yes; hardly ever without one for some years back. These last two or three years there has not been one. One was introduced last year, but I don't think he has got much to do yet.

4793. I conclude the Congested Districts Board horses have taken the place of all other stallions down there?—It is the favourite.

4794. And gets much the most custom?—Yes, and its produce are very much superior in appearance to what we have been accustomed to for a long time.

4795. How old is the produce now?—We have had the Hackney sires for three years, I think.

4796. They are two year old?—Yes. I have not seen many two-year-olds altogether, but I have seen a number of yearlings, and they are far and away superior to anything we were accustomed to.

4797. Do the farmers sell a good many of the produce at a year old?—They do, and sell earlier; they sell the good ones almost always.

4798.—As foals and yearlings?—And when they are older too—three years old and four.

4799. They sometimes keep them as long as that?—Yes.

4800. Where do they go to?—They are bought in the neighbouring fair; they never go to a fair outside in the county.

4801. You don't know who buys them?—No; a good many are bought locally, and put about from hand to hand sometimes, but most of the specially good ones go to the fairs and are carried away out of the county altogether.

4802. I suppose the small farmers in the neighbourhood of Dingle breed horses more for the purpose of sale than for their own requirements?—No, on the contrary they breed more for their own use, but when a farmer gets a good one he is tempted to sell.

4802A. Are the owners of the mares very small farmers, as a rule?—Yes.

4803. Then they possibly do not want more than one mare to work their farms?—Yes, and will only keep mares; they sell their colt foals and geldings.

4804. Then they must breed a good many more horses than they require for their own requirements?—They breed one almost every year.

4805. Surely that man breeds his horses for sale?—But not for the outside market; he breeds a horse that would be suitable for his neighbours about him.

4806. You approve of the Hackney horse and his produce in your district?—Yes, sir; they are a welcome improvement on those we have been accustomed to.

4807. Have you any experience of breeding from Clydesdales or Suffolk Punches or Shire horses?—Well, I had a mare got by a half-bred Clydesdale, but a very good one, that I refused £80 for one time.

4808. Do you approve of the Clydesdale sire?—I should like them better than the thoroughbred we have been accustomed to, but I should prefer the cobbish Hackney to the half-bred Clydesdale. I think he is a handier size, thicker and more suitable to our requirements.

4809. Do you think that the class of horse in your district has deteriorated in your own knowledge?—Yes, sir.

4810. Used to be better?—Yes.

4811. To what do you attribute that deterioration?—To these poor thoroughbreds and their half-bred offspring.

4812. What sires used the farmers use formerly? Before then they were usually half-bred from either Suffolk or Clydesdale or some of the common horses about the country whose pedigree very few could hunt up, but they were stronger bone and larger animals.

4813. You thought the stock by them was better?—Yes, better tempered, we got a lot of sour weeds from these inferior thoroughbreds.

4814. Have you any suggestion you would like to make as to the best means of helping the farmers to breed a better class of horses?—I think if you keep all the present horses for sometime until you lay the foundation to give us some mares, roomy, good dams, that might be put to thoroughbreds afterwards by those who prefer that class of horse you would be on the right road. But I think if we were to have thoroughbreds constantly, even though we start with a lot of suitable mares in a short time we would be back again to those that were not useful for genera work.

4815. You would get them too light?—Yes.

4816. Mr FITZWILLIAM.—What do you say the horses are to which you have been accustomed, you say you prefer the Hackneys to the horses that you have been accustomed to in the district, what were they?—The former ones were chiefly thoroughbreds or sires got by thoroughbreds out of any mare.

4817. But I mean were they very weedy ones?—Almost always.

4818. Very bad?—Yes.

4819. Were they often unsound?—Yes.

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4820. Then you prefer a good Hackney to a bad thoroughbred, is that what you mean?—And at the present time I should prefer a Hackney to even a good thoroughbred, I think it more likely to give us a supply of square good dams to breed from.

4821. If the thoroughbred was of the same calibre as the Hackney?—Well, even then, I think he would be more likely to get light horses than the Hackney would.

4822. What do the stallions there usually charge for covering a mare?—There is no uniform charge, a lot of them follow their friends and they pay fees down to almost nothing.

4823. And the mares are extremely small and weedy too, I suppose?—Yes.

4824. In fact they are not worth breeding from?—Not worth breeding from.

4825. And you think you can resuscitate that class of animal into a class of mare that is worth breeding from?—Well, your work is to improve bad ones I apprehend, we have no very good ones to make better, we have bad ones we should like to improve and I think the way to do it would be to make them heavier first of all.

4826. Mr. CAREW.—All the thoroughbreds that have been serving in your district were weedy ones?—Yes, though one was the winner of the Grand Stand Plate in Cork, he was perhaps one of the worst in the lot.

4827. At getting stock?—Yes.

4828. Then you approve of the Hackneys for the purpose of increasing the size and substance of the mares and then breeding by thoroughbreds?—When you have a foundation of good dams I imagine the thoroughbred will find his way without any special assistance, the man who requires to breed from him will always find him out, and his breeding constantly renewed there would in a very short time produce a lot of horses unsuitable to the requirements of the farmers.

4829. You think that mares can be improved by mating with the Hackney now?—I do, sir, and then when the mares are improved you could go back to the Hackney.

4830. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You don't require a very large breed of horses, do you, there?—No, sir.

4831. You want a thick set, active, useful horse?—Yes.

4832. Up until now you had a very good breed of ponies and small animals in the country and they were kept at a certain size?—My memory does not reach so far back as that time, I have heard of their breeding in the neighbouring barony more than the one I reside in, my memory does not take me back to the pony class.

4833. Do you think the country itself is capable of producing a horse that would sell to advantage outside its own county?—Oh, I do. I heard a gentleman say a while ago that £40 was a good price for a three-year-old, I refused £50 for a three-year-old this spring got by a thoroughbred, but a good one out of what is known as a common mare. There is plenty of good feeding down there for horses, but I should say it would not be a thoroughbred breeding country.

4834. You know some class of countries will grow size and others will not, do you think your country is capable of growing size?—I don't think so, sir.

4835. In your cattle you cannot grow size?—No, and with difficulty maintain size when we import them.

4836. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you find the produce of the Hackney very hardy?—They have not been amongst us long enough yet to know whether they are going to be hardy horses, they have the appearance of hardy horses.

4837. But I mean hardy young horses to lie out during the winter?—Yes, I have heard no fault found with them in that way.

4838. And you have had no experience yet as to whether they are easily broken or not?—They seem quiet and I have heard it remarked by some people that they very likely would be very easy to break.

4839. Have the produce of these Hackneys sold at better prices than the produce of the stallions you have had before?—I don't know that many of them have been put on the market at all.

4840. I mean in the neighbourhood where they have changed hands so far?—Not enough to give an idea as to what the general value would be.

4841. Are the foals now and the two-year-olds or whatever age, are they superior in appearance to their dams?—I only saw a considerable number of yearlings and they were certainly very much superior.

4842. To their dams?—Yes, and to everything that we were accustomed to see.

4843. And would you suggest any other horse being sent there in preference to the Hackney or would you rather have the Hackney?—I should rather see the others exterminated, those we have, I should like to see the bad ones inspected annually and put off altogether.

4844. But you think the Hackney is very suitable for your district?—I do.

4845. And do you think the people of the district share that opinion?—I am quite satisfied they do.

4846. That is the general opinion of the district?—Yes.

4847. Are those people an intelligent people, capable of forming an opinion as what suits them best?—I expect they know their own business.

4848. The Kerry people are fairly shrewd, are they not?—I should think so.

4849. And it has been suggested here that it is useless for small farmers of that type to breed horses, would it be possible to prevent them breeding?—I don't know what the law is capable of, but recommendations would not prevent them breeding.

4850. And as a matter of fact it pays them to breed, they get some profit?—Oh, yes, the mare is never idle.

4851. It is an industry that pays them?—Yes.

4852. And an industry that they will carry on?—Certainly.

4853. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You say that there are none of the Hackney breed sufficiently advanced for you to be able to form any opinion as to whether they are a hardy horse or not, or a useful horse, they are only young?—No, sir, they are only young.

4854. Then you are not speaking from any experience, it is only your fancy or idea that this will be an improvement?—It is more than fancy, as to their shape apparently they are a stouter horse than those bred from thoroughbreds.

4855. But it does not necessarily follow that because a horse is large he can do more work than a small or lighter horse, therefore you have no actual practical knowledge that a Hackney will produce a horse that can do more, it is only your idea that he will?—I know those we have from thoroughbreds are very bad, and I am very hopeful that those we have from Hackneys will be good.

4856. Quite so, but it is only hope at present?—Only hope at present.

4857. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think you could suggest any improvement in the scheme?—I don't know, sir, the removal of restrictions on the horses supplied by public bodies I think would be desirable, based on valuation or anything that way. I understand a mare that was blemished or did not recommend herself by good shapes is refused the services of the Hackney down there, and I don't think that is the wisest way to proceed, I imagine it would be better to let all who would come to him.

4858. Would you let the unsound mares go if they are manifestly unsound?—I would, they will go to some horse and they might as well go to a good one.

4859. And you would leave the restriction as to valuation out and let everybody have the same opportunity at the same fee?—Yes, at present the

low valuation means a scanty use of the horse or a scanty benefit from him, both would work, you would be giving his use to a class of farmer that was much more likely to sell a good one immediately.

4860. You would let bigger farmers in?—Yes.

4861. You know as a matter of fact that all his services were taken up?—Yes, and in consequence of the restrictions as to valuation I am aware that mares the property of farmers with larger valuation were surreptitiously put to the horse, that is to say they were put in the name of farmers of smaller valuation.

4862. So that the object which the Board desired was not arrived at?—No, I think if you made away with the inferior sires very few people would be injured.

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4863. Are they decreasing in any way, the inferior sires in the district?—Well, they have somewhat decreased since the Hackney made its appearance, but perhaps you cannot afford to subsidise horses all over the country always, and if you require a horse to pass an examination and be licensed I think you would effectually get rid of all the bad ones.

4864. You think it would be an improvement?—Yes.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

TENTH DAY.—THURSDAY, 26TH NOVEMBER, 1896.

Nov. 26, 1896.

Present:—LORD ASHTOWN (in the Chair); THE HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P., COLONEL ST. QUINTIN, and MR. F. S. WRENCH.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

MR. ST. JOHN DONOVAN, Seafield, Tralee, examined.

Mr. St. John Donovan.

4865. CHAIRMAN.—You are a Justice of the Peace for the County Kerry?—Yes.

4866. You live near Tralee?—Yes, within a few miles of it.

4867. You take a considerable interest in horse-breeding?—I take a great interest in horses and hunting.

4868. Do you breed any horses yourself?—In a very small way, personally. I have done a little.

4869. What class of horses are bred around your neighbourhood?—There are two or three classes; there is the hunter and the draft horses, but our hunters are rather light in Tralee and district.

4870. You mean they breed more of the draft than the hunters?—No, they breed more hunters, but the hunter stallions are rather light.

4871. The sires used are rather light?—Yes.

4872. What class of soil is there?—Rather coarse in portions.

4873. Is it suitable for horse-breeding?—Oh, yes.

4874. Are the farms large or small?—They are generally mixed. You would call them small, up here at any rate. Thirty acres is about the average round us.

4875. Are there many sires in your district?—There are a fair number within a radius of ten miles. I suppose about six.

4876. Are they suitable for the wants of the district?—No, the sires for the hunters are too light, and have not sufficient bone.

4877. What class of sire, as a rule, are they?—Thoroughbred, mostly. Of course we have some of the Clydesdale, too, for draft work, and some half-breds.

4878. Have you any experience of the Hackneys introduced by the Congested Districts Board?—Not personally, nor have I had a chance of seeing them, because they are out of my district. I have not seen the young horses, and cannot give you an opinion on them, but from what I have heard, they are not giving such satisfaction.

4879. You have not yourself seen any of the young horses got by these horses?—I have not.

4880. Do you think their introduction would have any effect on the breeding of hunters in your district?—I think it would affect the breed of hunters.

4881. In what way, good or bad?—Bad, from what I can learn. I have no personal knowledge. I am speaking only from what I have learned from the people, who have seen the Hackney in the district.

4882. That is the general opinion of the people?—Yes, I think that is the opinion of the farmers around.

4883. You cannot say yourself whether the horses are suitable for the district or not?—Not from personal knowledge.

4884. Do you think the farmers would take advantage of suitable sires being placed in the district?—They would, they are very anxious to do so, if they got them at a fee that they could pay, but the fees generally are rather too high for a good horse, and they will not take him.

4885. What is the general fee?—£2 or £3.

4886. What fees are charged for ordinary country stallions?—£4 or £5 for a gentleman's hunter. Personally I had to pay £4. I am not sure what the farmers have to pay. I think it is about thirty shillings.

4887. For the ordinary half-bred?—Yes.

4888. And they charge you £4?—Yes.

4889. MR. FITZWILLIAM.—The ordinary country stallion?—No, the thoroughbred. I have not bred from any of the half-breds myself, but to the farmer I believe the fee is from a pound to thirty shillings.

4890. CHAIRMAN.—What class of mares are there in your district?—The mares are rather weedy and light. We have some good old mares, but the farmers are not breeding. They are coming in rather too light.

4891. What do you mean?—They are keeping them too light, not looking out for the points to mate with properly.

4892. How would you suggest the mares should be improved?—Well, if there is a good stallion of course they will come on.

4893. Keeping the fillies?—Yes.

4894. What sort of stallion would you suggest as suitable?—I think the thoroughbred for a hunter; a horse with plenty of bone, and strong.

4895. You would not approve of the half-bred stallion?—I do not think so. They do not seem to do so well. We have a Yorkshire carriage horse there now, and he is doing rather well. I have seen some of his foals, two year olds, and they are fine promising colts. What they will turn out afterwards I don't know, because they have not had time to be trained.

4896. Are there any registered sires in your district under the Royal Dublin Society Scheme?—I think Cashman is; he is about ten miles away. That is the only one in my immediate district

4897. Do they hold local shows, is the scheme in

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operation?—We had a local show this year, but the Royal Dublin Society only gave a small grant to us.

4898. Is the scheme doing good in your district?—It has not been availed of by us in our immediate district.

4899. The farmers have not taken it up?—No.

4900. Do you approve of the present scheme?—I think it will do good in time, but it will take time.

4901. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Why do you think the farmers have not taken up the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society?—Well, I do not know. There is no special reason, only that they are slow to take up anything that is.

4902. They have no radical objection to the scheme?—No, not to my knowledge.

4903. Mr. CAREW.—You say the farmers are charged £2 for the service of a horse?—From a pound to thirty shillings for the common breed, and £2 for the thoroughbred.

4904. That is much too high?—It is too high. Our farms are small. A large farm would be thirty acres in our district.

4905. You think the introduction of a good thoroughbred sire with bone and substance would improve the breed?—I am certain of it.

4906. At a reasonable fee?—Yes.

4907. The farmers are quite enough alive to their own interests to select him in preference to a less desirable horse at a lower fee?—I think so, and I think every stallion should be licensed, they ought to be registered, and pass a thorough examination. In some cases with us there have been many blemishes.

4908. Unsoundness in wind and limb you want to eradicate?—Yes.

4909. Mr. WRENCH.—Your part of Kerry is better than the rest of Kerry, Mr. Donovan?—Yes, it is the better portion.

4910. There is good land around Tralee, I believe?—Yes.

4911. What size are the ordinary mares belonging to the farmers?—They breed from 15.1, an average size.

4912. There are many a good deal smaller, of course?—Yes.

4913. Have they deteriorated or not lately?—For the last few years I do not think they have deteriorated so much.

4914. Have they improved?—No, they are just stationary.

4915. Do you say their greatest fault is that they are weedy?—Yes.

4916. Do you think they are strong enough to go on breeding from thoroughbred horses with these mares?—Not with these mares. There are some of the farmers who have very fine mares, but somehow or other they do not breed from them. When they are young they sell them; that is, when they have a good mare. They realize the money instead of keeping the mare and making money out of her if she got a good cattle.

4917. You do not think a thoroughbred would be the right horse to be bred from with these weedy mares?—I do not think so.

4918. What horse, then?—A good half-bred would be better.

4919. Then you would approve of a half-bred horse?—For these weedy mares.

4920. What would you call a half-bred horse?—If you could get one out of a real old Irish mare by a thoroughbred sire.

4921. You would be in favour of registering horses bred in that way?—I would.

4922. Do you think there are many of what you call real old Irish mares in the country?—There are in our district a fair number.

4923. You could trace how they are bred?—Yes.

4924. How long has this Yorkshire coach-horse been in that district?—Two or three years.

4925. He is a pedigree Yorkshire coach-horse, is he?—Yes.

4926. What size is he?—About 16.1½.

4927. He would be rather large for some of the smaller mares?—Yes.

4928. Rather a violent cross?—Yes, but his colts are good, and I have seen some from small mares and they are promising well.

4929. Were you at Tralee Show last September?—I was.

4930. Do you remember the class of colts entered for a cup offered by Colonel Crosbie?—Yes.

4931. Do you remember the first and second animals there?—Yes; that is Murphy's, I think; I do not well remember.

4932. Were they a good class?—If it is Murphy's you mean——

4933. I am asking was it a good class, those particular animals?—I think so.

4934. Those two?—Yes.

4935. Do you know how they were bred?—I think the one that got the prize was by Waterloo, one of the thoroughbreds standing in the district?—And out of an old Irish mare belonging to a man named Murphy.

4936. And do you know what the reserve horse was by?—No, I do not.

4937. Was he a nice horse?—I am not certain, really, because I was not over that class at the show. I had some other duties to perform. I was on another committee.

4938. You did take part in the show?—Yes.

4939. Was it a good show?—A very fair show.

4940. Was there a good class of mares shown?—Well, fair; it was the first we have started for some years now.

4941. A fair number of entries altogether?—Yes, a fair number.

4942. Were there many sires exhibited?—There were some.

4943. Any cart horses?—Yes, some Clydesdales, three or four.

4944. Practically of the congested districts you do not profess to have much experience?—No, I am not in a congested district myself.

4945. CHAIRMAN.—I take it that you suggest the best sire for the best mares in your district would be the thoroughbred horse?—A thoroughbred to get hunters.

4946. And for the inferior class of mare a good half-bred?—Yes.

4947. Mr. CAREW.—You are strongly in favour of registration?—Yes.

4948. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you have stated that the tendency of the farmers is to sell their good mares?—Yes, when they have a young good-looking mare they generally sell her.

4949. Can you make any suggestion that would tend to make them keep the good mares and breed from them?—I suppose if there was a prize for a certain class—a good brood mare with foal at foot. That would induce people to keep the good ones.

4950. CHAIRMAN.— Something like the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme at present?—Yes.

4951. That has not taken yet you say?—It has not with us yet.

4952. When you say you are in favour of registration, do you mean for sires as well as mares?—I think so.

J. BUTLER, Waterville, County Kerry, examined.

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4953. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Waterville, County Kerry?—Yes.

4954. Have you had any personal experience of horse-breeding?—Considerable experience, for the last twenty years. I have bred a lot of horses myself and kept a sire some time ago.

4955. What class of horses did you try to breed?—A good class of horse; I have bred some Hackneys too. In my country it is very little use to try to breed a good horse, a heavy horse in fact, when you have them you must sell them.

4956. What sire did you keep?—A Shire horse, but he did not do very well. The people did not take to him and I got rid of him.

4957. Are many horses bred around your neighbourhood?—I think there are some, very few. I had him only for three years, the people thought him too big and heavy for the district. The small farmers breed a good many. The majority of the farms around me are small. They average from £5 to £6 or £7 in rent.

4958. What class of mares have these farmers?—Useful, hardy, cobby, pony mares.

4959. What size are they?—From 14.2 to 15 hands, the majority of them.

4960. Are there many sires in the country suitable for those little mares?—There has been no sire for some time at all suitable to them, until the Congested Districts Board sent one to Cahirciveen.

4961. You live in a congested district?—I live in the centre of the most congested district in Ireland, I think, certainly the most congested district in the South of Ireland.

4962. Do you consider these sires the most suitable for the district in which you live?—They have done considerable good in the district. They have given the small farmer of the district an animal that will be useful to him for his own work, that is a small, strong, stout horse, quiet and easily trained, and he is suitable for the farmers' own work in that district?

4963. What do the farmers do with the horses?—Light farm work, and for going to market, and drawing light loads, seaweed and sand, that is while they are young.

4964. But do they work the produce on the land before they sell it, of these little mares?—They either keep the foal or sell it at fifteen months old.

4965. They do not work them before they sell them?—They either work or sell them when they are two years old or fifteen months old.

4966. Are the horses in your district improving or deteriorating?—I think they are pretty well at a stand still.

4967. No difference one way or the other?—No, for years there has been nothing but the worst class of half-bred and quarter bred sires, in fact sires without any breeding at all, standing in the district of Cahirciveen and around it. There is no thoroughbred horse, except one that was there some years ago. He was there for three years, but he did not suit the district, though he was a very good horse in his way; "Ward Union" was his name.

4968. Are these young horses sold at fairs or to dealers who come round?—They are principally sold in fairs for local use; bought by one small farmer from another.

4969. They are kept in the district?—A great many of them.

4970. Are the prices improving?—The principal fair these horses are sold at is Puck fair, held at Killorglin every August. I have seen a great many of them sold for the last few years; £5, £6, £7, or £8 would be given for yearlings.

4971. What were these got by?—A great many of them by the Hackney horse standing in Cahirciveen. This is the third season he has been there. A small farmer, for his own use, when he could get one of these Hackney horses, he preferred it.

4972. You said you bred from a Hackney?—The oldest I have got by him are only three years old. I have three of his gets.

4973. Do you like the look of the progeny?—Yes, for certain purposes.

4974. What purposes?—Harness work.

4975. Do you think the Hackney stallion introduced into your district will affect the other districts of the country?—Very slightly, indeed.

4976. You think the horses bred in your district are kept in your district, and do not spread to the rest of Kerry?—A great many of them are. It is not what you call a horse breeding district, and the horses bred there are fit for very little except for the use of the farmer.

4977. Has the Royal Dublin Society Scheme been working in your district?—No; not within fifty or sixty miles; there is no horse belonging to the Society.

4978. You do not know anything about the working of it?—I am one of the Committee that have been working it there.

4979. Do you think it is working satisfactorily?—No, I do not think the farmers are taking it up. They do not send mares to the shows. It is very up-hill work, trying to work it in Kerry.

4980. Have you a sufficient number of shows?—We have shows in Tralee, Castleisland, and Killorglin, but they do not send their mares, and seem to take little interest in the scheme. In time, I have no doubt, it will do good.

4981. Have any of the farmers in your district got what you would call a really good mare, or are they all these ponies?—I do not know a mare in my district that you would choose if you wanted to breed a hunter, with perhaps one or two exceptions.

4982. You think the best fillies are taken away from the district?—Very few; comparatively few; they are not good enough to leave the district, the majority of them.

4983. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say the majority of the farms in your district are extremely small?—Yes.

4984. Are there a great number of these horses bred; do all the farmers breed?—No, not every year, as a rule; every second or third year only; and they breed chiefly for their own requirements, either that or to sell the progeny when it is a year or a year and a-half old.

4985. Where do they sell?—In the local fares.

4985. I think you said the stallions that had hitherto stood in the district were extremely bad?—There are four of them in the district at present, and out of the four, three of them are as bad as they can be, and the other is a fair horse. Then, there has been a horse sent down by the Congested Districts Board.

4986. Of the four local stallions there is only one that is of any use?—There are three bad ones in addition. I am not speaking of the Congested Districts Board horse at all.

4987. But there has been one sent there?—Yes, for four years now in the district.

4988. How do the fees of the two sets of horses compare? What do they charge for the service of these others?—For a small farmer usually the fee will be about ten to fifteen shillings for a country bred horse.

4989. What does the Congested Districts Board charge?—A nominal registration fee for a mare, of five shillings.

4990. Half what the others charge?—Yes.

4991. Are any of the stock of the Congested Districts Board horse used yet for work?—Very few. I know ten or a dozen two-year-olds, that is two coming three, and they are working.

4992. On their own farms?—Yes, and they drive them in light carts.

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4993. You have seen them?—I have seen them.

4994. Would you approve of a half-bred horse standing down in your country, if he was suitable in shape, make, and action?—My idea of a suitable horse for that district would be what I call a hunter sire, a stout horse, bred well on both sides, and not too finely bred.

4995. If you could you would like it from the produce of one of these old Irish mares?—A very good mare, and a good sire that had been getting a good class of horse.

4996. You think that is the best class of animals to suit the district?—In my opinion, it is.

4997. Mr. CAREW.—Better than the Hackney?—Yes, I think with the cross of the Hackney we have now, this horse would be the most suitable, and a great benefit to the district.

4998. A well-bred half-bred with a good dash of thoroughbred blood?—A fair dash of thoroughbred. One reason why the horses are so bad in my district is that for the first year or year and a half they are not properly fed. Unless you feed a horse well when he is young, he will never turn out well, in my experience.

4999. Are you in favour of registering sires?—My idea is that all horses standing for a fee should be registered by the Government, backed by a veterinary certificate to say that they are free from hereditary disease.

5000. If they had any blemishes would you have these stated on the certificate?—Anything hereditary. I would do away with all the common sires in the country if possible; if course compensating the owners.

5001. Mr. WRENCH.—You kept a Shire stallion at one time?—I did, eight or nine years ago.

5002. You did not find it suitable to the country mares?—No.

5003. Do you think a Clydesdale would be more successful?—Certainly not.

5004. Can you suggest in the first instance a more suitable sire than a Hackney for the mares as they are now?—I think not, in the first instance, but by introducing a half-bred horse with the cross there now you will vastly improve the breed.

5005. But you think the Hackney is the right cross to begin with?—For the present.

5006. Follow that on then with the cross of a hunter sire?—Yes.

5007. You know, in addition to your own district, the congested district in Kerry very well?—Yes, I have been all over it.

5008. Do pretty much the same characteristics prevail all over it, as far as horse-breeding is concerned?—Yes, the Dingle district is better than the Cahirciveen district. The land is better, and there is a better class of mares there.

5009. It is essential that an animal sent down there must get stock that will be able to go through very hard treatment?—Yes.

5010. You want something that will do hard work and can be out at night?—Yes, and be comparatively quiet and easily trained.

5011. And you think the Hackneys do that?—So far as I can see they do.

5012. Have the fees charged for the local stallions been reduced since the horse was sent down by the Congested District Board?—They could not reduce them much, they charged ten shillings and sometimes less.

5013. The owners of local stallions as a rule give time for the payment of this ten shillings?—Yes, they take it as they get it.

5014. Whereas the Board requires their five shillings on the spot?—Yes, before the first service.

5015. So the people like one way as well as the other. They would probably rather have the ten shillings to pay as they like, than the five shillings on the spot?—Yes. I think there have been forty to sixty or up to seventy mares sent to the Board's horse in Cahirciveen every year since he has been there.

5016. He has got his full number?—Most years. I do not know about this year, but I know the first year he could have got a great deal more than his number. They would not be taken.

5017. Do you know whether they have got better prices for the produce of this stallion?—They have got from £1 to £1 10s., sometimes £2 more for the produce of the Hackney than for the produce of the ordinary sire.

5018. And the price of horses has been falling all the time?—The price of that class of horse has not fallen as much as the others, it was always very low. That class is bought by small farmers for their own use.

5019. How did the produce of the Hackney look as compared with their dams?—They are stouter, and a considerable improvement as far as shapes and appearance go.

5020. Were you at Tralee show?—I was.

5021. Do you remember the class I asked Mr. Donovan about?—Yes; I have a catalogue here.

5022. Was it a good class all round?—It was a very fair class, very good considering.

5023. Do you remember how many entries there were in the class?—Twelve entries for "two-year-olds, colts or fillies, suitable for hunting purposes." The class was for horses over two and under three.

5024. Do you know how the horse that took first place was bred?—By a sire called Waterloo, a thoroughbred.

5025. And the reserve?—The Reserve or Second in the class was got by "Fireaway the Second," a horse bred in Cahirciveen, by a Hackney. It was by King Fireaway.

5026. Have you any scheme you would suggest by which people could be induced to keep their best mares?—I think the great thing for improving the breed is to have good sires. If you keep on having good sires you will improve the breed eventually. Of course the mares are only isolated cases, they may do some good, but I have no suggestion to make to induce them to keep them.

5027. You think the sire is the chief thing, and you know of no practical way to induce the people to keep their best mares?—No practical way.

5028. CHAIRMAN.—As far as I gather, you said your idea of the horse for the district was first the Hackney sire and the hunter sire next; have you any special reason for putting the Hackney sire first?—The Hackneys are there and have done a certain amount of good. My idea would be to put the hunter sire on their progeny from a country mare.

5028A. You would choose the Hackney first?—I would take the hunter sire first.

5029. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You think suitable animals might be produced if there was a demand—well-bred half-breds, with a good dash of thoroughbred blood in them, for the purpose of standing in these different localities?—I think it would be very hard to procure that animal.

5030. If the demand were created, do you think it would soon be supplied?—If the demand were created, and the men who bred that class of horse were induced to keep them without cutting them—if the demand was there, you would get the horse.

5031. If you could get them you would prefer them to any other?—I would, for that district.

5032. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know of any hunter sires?—No, not in that district; I have known them in others.

5033. Do you know of any special horse you would like to have there?—Not that I can name at the present moment.

5034. The horse you suggest should be bred specially?—I think so.

5035. He does not exist in any great number?

5036. At present?—I am afraid not.

5037. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any suggestion to

make as to how you would encourage the breed of him?—I think if such an animal was there he would be bought. If he was there certain men would breed from him.

5038. Would you be in favour of the Royal Dublin Society taking half-bred sires on their register?—For the congested districts I would, but not for ordinary service in what you call horse-breeding districts. For districts like Mallow and Fermoy and around there, I think nothing more suitable than a good thoroughbred, but in my district a thoroughbred would be no use.

5039. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think the hunter sire would be as good as the Hackney for action?—I think a great deal of the Hackney action is made, and they are better without it.

5040. Do you think the foals have too much action?—No, not too much.

5041. Mr. CAREW.—At the time of the introduction of the Hackney into your district, you would have preferred a hunter?—Yes.

5042. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any other suggestion to make?—Nothing; but I am afraid the introduction of bicycles and motor cars will injure the Hackney.

5043. Mr. WRENCH.—Is Kerry a good county for bicycling?—The finest in Ireland.

Mr. GEORGE HEWSON, Dromahaire, County Leitrim, examined.

5044. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Leitrim?—I live on the borders of Leitrim and Sligo.

5045. You are a land agent there, and own some property yourself?—Yes.

5046. Do you breed horses yourself?—I keep from two to four brood mares as a rule.

5047. Are there a great many horses bred round your district?—A good many have been. The farmers are rather going out of breeding lately.

5048. What is the reason of that?—The reason of it, in my opinion, is that it is so very difficult to sell anything now, but a horse really up to weight.

5049. What class of horses have you bred yourself?—I have up to last two years invariably bred from a thoroughbred horse out of a half-bred mare. I have also of late years put a Hackney in a few cases to a fairly bred mare to try what would come of it.

5050. What was your experience?—I have been unlucky as regards the produce. I have tried it on six occasions. On three occasions the mare did not hold, on one the foal died, and I have to see what is going to happen with the other two.

5051. That is your personal experience?—Yes, I have also been looking at the foals got by Hackney horses.

5052. What is your opinion of the foals?—In my opinion the Hackney horse does not do with the ordinary country bred mares. I do not like the look of the foals. They are a heavy, lumpy sort of animal without any action. I think very likely with a small fairly bred mare the Hackney would do well.

5053. What class of mares are in your district?—A good many half-bred mares, and further down also a good many. In Sligo there are a great many good mares, but I do not think the farmers are sufficiently alive to the fact that they should be sound. I think they will breed from a good-looking mare, even if she is spavined.

5054. Are they small or big?—From 14.2 to 15.2 in Leitrim; 15 to 15·3 in Sligo.

5055. Do they work these mares on the lands?—It is a mixed country. Many do, a few do not. There are a good many small farms and big farms as well.

5056. You do not think the Hackney suitable for your district?—No. I do not.

5057. At what age do they sell the horses around your neighbourhood?—Smaller farmers sell foals. The farmers usually used to sell them as three-year-olds; now they have to wait till they are four or five.

5058. That is the bigger farmers?—All farmers who breed horses. Others keep them to work on their farms.

5059. Work them first and then sell them when they get aged?—Yes, start working them at two off.

5060. Do you think it is paying them to breed as well now as before?—Certainly not. All the fairs in our county have gone utterly to the bad.

5061. What class of horses would you recommend the farmers to breed?—I breed at present by a thoroughbred horse out of a half-bred mare, and consider this should be done by all breeders. I do a great deal of driving long distances. I never drive any but this class of horse. They are excellent for general utility purposes. They do not sell too well as four or five year olds. In fact I cannot get anything like the price I got ten years ago for them.

5062. If you wanted the farmers of your district to make money by breeding, what course would you suggest they should take?—In the first place the Government should assist them by giving them a market for their lighter horses, which in my opinion would do very well for troopers.

5063 But cannot they sell the troopers now?—No, I think not.

5064. Don't they buy troopers in your district?—Yes, they are bought by dealers who make their own market, and give nothing like the full value.

5065. You mean the Government should send a representative directly themselves and buy?—To a great extent, yes; but I think depots should be formed in various districts where suitable horses of that class are bred, and the horses should be bought direct from the farmers. If the Government cannot at present buy them as three-year-olds, I think they should buy direct from the farmers and send them to these depots for a year. That would get over the difficulty greatly.

5066. What class of land is about you?—A very mixed class of land. It is wet, retentive land around me, a good deal of limestone, and a great deal of boggy nature over the limestone. The latter I find best for horses.

5067. You prefer bog to limestone?—Not exactly bog; but bog running into limestone land that in years gone by has been turbary and has been reclaimed.

5068. You prefer to breed horses on that rather than limestone?—I have both classes of land, and I find my horses do a great deal better on that than on a purely limestone farm.

5069. In what respect?—They grow better, and have better bone. I know that is against the general theory, but it is what I have found in practice. There is limestone on part of this farm I talk of.

5070. What class of sires are in your district?—Around my district we are hard up for sires. In Sligo they have an excellent lot. "Sir George" has got some excellent market horses, and "Loved One," who has just been sold out of the country, was in my opinion a beautiful horse. Sir George is too old; a good thoroughbred is much needed.

5071. Is that a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, the sire of "Dinna Forget." In my opinion he was rather too light for the country I think what we know as a carty thoroughbred gets a better market horse than the light thoroughbred.

5072. A heavy thoroughbred?—Yes. Then in Mayo, where I bought a good many horses, they had a most excellent strain of horses got originally by "Blacklock," and by "Lothario," who got first-class stock.

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Mr. George Hewson.

5073. Are you on the borders of Mayo?—No, but I very often go there, and I have bought horses in Ballina.

5074. Are there any half-bred horses in your district?—There was one, and he was a very good horse, and there were two or three more I don't approve of, the good one was called "Dandy," belonging to a man named Nixon. I forget his breeding, but he got good stock

5075. Would you be in favour of the Royal Dublin Society registering good half-bred sires?—Yes, under certain conditions. Give them a licence and subsidise them as well. You cannot prevent any man keeping any sire he likes, but if a man applied to the Royal Dublin Society to have his horse registered, and got a subsidy of £15 or £20 a year for keeping him, it would enable him to give that horse cheaper to the farmers, and by degrees weed out the useless sires.

5076. Would you agree to these horses being registered under the same conditions as thoroughbreds now provided they pass good horses?—Yes; while on that subject I do not think the present scheme of the Royal Dublin Society is nearly as good as the old one, which was subsidising sires. A good many mares used to go to the local shows when a subsidy was given to the sire, and they got the service at a cheaper rate. Now it is a matter of speculation when farmers have to go to a thoroughbred horse, pay high fees, and trust to the chance of getting a prize at the autumn shows, the scheme does not work. At our local shows, for instance, at a place called Manorhamilton, speaking for Leitrim only, we had three aged mares, three young mares, and three foals to show. In another district, Mohill, we had only two young mares, three aged, and a foal. In Carrick we had only one mare. Originally while the sires were subsidised we had a great deal better shows. I should like to say also on that question that the Dublin Society's plan was not altogether a good way of registering their sires. In any application that came to them I understand if the horse was sound they registered him as a Government sire without practically seeing the horse or whether he was really suitable for the district.

5077. I think we had it in evidence that such was not the case?—I am prepared to write you down the names of two horses, one being a sure non-foal getter, and the other a very weedy horse that was not suitable at all for the country.

5078. Mr. WRENCH.—Are they on the register now?—One of them is, the other is not.

5079. Mr. CAREW.—Which is on the register, the non-foal getter?—Yes, I think so. The weed is not on. The non-foal getter is.

5080. Mr. WRENCH.—Is that in Leitrim?—I should not like to say what county it is.

5081. CHAIRMAN. — Have you any other suggestion to make about the Royal Dublin Society scheme?—No, but I would like to say that I think the Horse Show in Dublin has very much spoiled the western market. All you can sell is a made horse, and it handicaps us enormously in the west to have to send up a horse to the Show. We cannot do it under £10, which takes a considerable amount off the price of an average horse. I think if the local shows were encouraged, and that a class at the local shows were opened for troopers, a trooper class, and if there was a trooper class at the Royal Dublin Society Show, it would assist the breed of the ordinary horse very much. I am very much afraid that the people in my neighbourhood will go clean out of breeding horses for the reason that they cannot dispose of their lighter horses, and that in the event of war and a lot of troopers being required they will not be there to be got.

5082. If it cost you £10 for bringing a horse to Dublin, it would hardly be worth bringing up a hores to get a trooper prize?—I am only speaking of the western counties to have local shows for troopers, but I think it would pay the Dublin and Meath men to send to Dublin Show if there was a class for troopers.

5083. Do you mean to suggest that the money given by the Royal Dublin Society for the improvement of horses should be sent to local shows?—No, but I say the Government should give a considerable amount more than now for that purpose. Of course the argument is that the army estimates are framed on certain lines, and, *qua* army estimates, you cannot spend more than a certain amount on troopers, but if the Government came to the rescue in another department, I think it could be done.

5084. What stallion do you think most suitable for your district?—I think the strong thoroughbred is.

5085. You would be in favour of a good half-bred being used too?—In my neighbourhood the difficulty is that these good thoroughbreds are fourteen and fifteen miles away, and in the districts where this is the case, such as mine, I think the Government should send down a horse if possible.

5086. Then you do not think there are a sufficient number of suitable sires in your district?—No, there are not; they are all huddled up in one spot a long way off, and people have too far to go.

5087. Are there any registered sires near you?—The nearest is fourteen miles, and a farmer will not go that distance.

5088. Is there a ready market?—There used to be an excellent market ten or twelve years ago. I brought a string of young horses into Boyle fair, for instance, and friends of mine have done the same. These we used to sell at £30 or £40 apiece for a three-year-old; now you would not get anything like that price.

5089. For what purpose were they sold?—Mostly as troopers. Now you go to the same Boyle fair on the 1st of October, which was our great market for getting rid of that class of long-tail, and we cannot sell them at all. I had one horse, a four-year-old mare, by a horse called "Dalhousie," and should not have had the slightest difficulty in getting £35 ten years ago. I asked £30 and did not get a bid. I told my man to ask £10, to see if he could induce anyone to bid. I should not have sold her at it, of course, but there was nobody to make a bid. At Ballinasloe fair I sold a five-year-old mare, by "Duncombe" by "Speculum," sound and a good jumper—I sold her to Swiss for £26, when I could have got £60 for her ten years ago.

5090. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Have you any suggestion to make with regard to trying to keep the good mares in the country?—No; I think it is an impossibility, as things go at present. I think if you go in for breeding from a better class of horse, you will by degrees get a better class of mare, and they will stop in the country whether you will or no. If you improve your mares up to a better standard, you will have a great many more good mares to keep.

5091. If you have only a limited amount of money, should you prefer to spend it in subsidizing good stallions throughout the different districts?—I think it would pay a great deal better, spending the money on the stallion. The stallion owner has much the greater risk. It costs a lot of money to get his stallion and to keep his stallion, as well as advertising and everything else.

5092. In England, under the Queen's Premiums, the arrangement is to give £200 to the stallion owner, and the horse is obliged to cover a certain number of mares in his district at a certain price—£2, I think?—I think that would be a most excellent arrangement in Ireland. They allocate to our county sixty sovereigns, which has to go to several stallions. I think if there could be such an arrangement as there is in England it would tend to improve the class of horses in this country.

5093. What breed of stallion would you suggest as the best?—I think, in the first instance, a strong thoroughbred, certainly. Later on, I should say a

sound half-bred by a thoroughbred horse out of a really well-known, well-proved, sound mare.

5094. And you think these would be calculated between them to get every class of animal, barring, I will say, the agricultural horse, that is required in the district?—Yes; and, as a proof of that, I may say I have taken that class of horses up to the Moy fair, in the county Tyrone, which is the great harness horse fair in the North, and I had no difficulty in selling.

5095. What sort of fees do you think a good stallion in your district could get—either a thoroughbred or one of these half-breds; what fee do you think he would command?—At present we have to pay from about £4 to £5, but I think the farmers would pay £1 if the owner was subsidised, and I think that would be quite enough.

5096. Mr. CAREW.—You say there is a great depression in prices within the last ten years?—Yes.

5097. But no deterioration in the quality of the horse now as compared with the one you sold ten years ago?—No.

5098. How do you account for that depression?—The very fact that the ordinary utility horse is so much less wanted now than formerly, and that he has gone up in all grades. The heavy-weight horse, of course, is a speciality, and will always command a big price, until they get to hunt on bicycles.

5099. You suggested the Government should open depôts in the different districts for troopers, and hold them on?—Yes.

5100. Mr. WRENCH.—You say the mares in your district are from 14.2 to 15.2?—Yes.

5101. Have they much Clydesdale blood, or any crossed-blood?—A few of them have. I have a Clydesdale mare I bred from; she has very good foals from a thoroughbred horse.

5102. Do you think, as a rule, the mares would be strong enough for a thoroughbred horse?—As a rule, yes.

5103. He would be the most generally useful horse at the present time?—Yes.

5104. You gave an opinion to the Congested Districts Board that a Norfolk trotter would be a good horse to send there?—Yes, but I have changed my mind from seeing the foals of the hackney horse.

5105. Have you seen any foals from the horse that has been there two years, this year's foals?—No.

5106. Not any from the horses there now?—Yes; I saw my own foal from the horse that was in Ballinamore, I think, last year, but I do not think it would be a fair criterion to instance him. He was very small from a well-bred mare whose dam was a half-bred mare, but I think the size of the foal was the mare's own fault. She had not milk enough for him and he died.

5107. Did you know that the horse we sent there before, unfortunately, was the only Hackney we had with any Norfolk blood in him?—I think Rokeby was supposed to be a Yorkshire.

5108. Was Rokeby there? oh, you are right. That is the horse you allude to?—Yes. I think the cross between the Hackney and the really fairly bred mare would probably get a good stepping horse for London purposes, but the market for that class is so very limited I do not think it should be encouraged generally.

5109. Do you think the farmers would send to a thoroughbred horse if it was sent there?—I am perfectly certain they would, if they had popular prices.

5110. At present, I believe, Leitrim is the only county in Ireland where there is not a thoroughbred horse standing?—I think so; we are very badly off for that reason. It is a long narrow county, and a horse at the northern end would not be much use at the southern end.

5111. Do horses come in from Sligo?—Yes, and in North Leitrim we go to Sligo a good deal.

5112. Do you know any half-bred horse in your county that would be worth registering?—This horse of Nixon's if he was alive.

5113. You do not know how he was bred?—No, he got excellent stock indiscriminately, big horses and ponies.

5114. He was a half-bred horse?—Yes.

5115. This mare you offered for £10, was she a well-bred mare?—Yes, a well-bred four-year-old. What I want to emphasize is that the fairs in our country have gone to the bad, something must be done to create some kind of a market. Though we are supposed, I believe, not to understand this question. I think the trooper question is really the biggest one.

5116. The people must breed some animals for their own use?—Yes.

5117. That must go on whether there are bicycles and motor cars or not?—I think so, certainly.

5118. A certain amount of breeding must go on, and the question is how that can be made pay?—Quite so.

5119. Would you call it a paying business to breed from your own mares, animals only good enough for troopers?—What I find is this, for no reason whatsoever, you will get a big horse one year out of the same horse and the same mare and possibly a small one the next year out of the same horse and mare. It is these smaller horses that take the gilt off the ginger bread. Whatever you make on the big one you lose on the small. That is really what is putting the farmers in my country off breeding.

T. W. WEBBER, Kellyville, Athy.

5121. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Queen's County?—Yes.

5122. And you have bred a good many horses yourself?—Yes, I began thirty years ago, and have bred mostly every year since.

5123. What class of mares?—Every sort. I have tried every kind.

5124. What horse have you tried to breed?—Principally the hunter; our county is suitable for hunters.

5125. Is the soil limestone able to breed a good strong horse with plenty of bone?—Yes. The difficulty is to get plenty of bone.

5126. Will you describe to us some of the different mares?—I have bred from good hunter mares I have ridden myself, up to fourteen stone, I put them to the best thoroughbred and got a light weedy animal up to no weight and worth about £25 generally; in one case out of twenty I got a first prize horse at the Dublin show of quality, but the majority are too light; that is when bred from the hunter mare and the thoroughbred; the only way I can succeed in breeding a hunter is to have a first or second cross from the old Irish mare; I have got two of them now that I breed from with the best horse I can get, a horse called "Philammon." He is a tremendous big horse and the mares are sixteen hands; they are the old Irish breed, as near as I can get them; perhaps they may have one cross of the thoroughbred. I consider a first or second cross of the race-horse with the old Irish mare is the best; that is the only way you can get a weight carrier; you can get lots of little light ladies' mounts but you cannot get a weight-carrier for certain with thoroughbred sires.

5127. What do you mean by an old Irish mare?—In my younger days there were plenty of the farmers in the hilly parts who had the old Irish mares that they would not part with for anything, and they knew their grandmothers and great grandmothers; they said they would part with the colts but not with

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the mares and they considered as long as they kept the old stock of mares they would do well, but they found in many cases that the difficulty was to get the stallions of the same breed. There are very few of the old Irish stallions existing now because the Royal Dublin Society has discouraged the Irish breeds and given only prizes for the English breeds, consequently he is scarcely in the country.

5128. You mean the old half-bred stallion?—I don't call him a half-bred, I call him the old Irish stallion, they used to exist but now there are very few owing to the failure of the Royal Dublin Society to encourage the old Irish breed; it is very hard to get now, but I still believe it could be done if prizes were given, and I think in time you could get up a stock of them.

5129. You mean to raise a sort of half-breed?—I would not call it a half-breed.

5130. Can you get them with pedigrees to rely on?—If you search I believe you can find them. You can only take the animals as you see them, as near as you can possibly get to what you want, and if his progeny goes wrong you reject the bad ones and keep the good ones.

5131. Do the farmers round about you breed many horses?—A vast number.

5132. What stallions do they use?—They used the thoroughbred till they got sick of him; they cannot get the old Irish stallion and they have to take to the Shire horse.

5133. What class of mares have they got?—The progeny of the old Irish mare; the old Irish mare I look on as the purest stock of the famous Irish hunter, they have been crossed for years with the thoroughbred, and they have got too small, and the farmer has found that it does not pay him to breed and he has had to cross with the nearest Clydesdale or Shire horse in order to get size.

5134. Would you advocate breeding from the Clydesdale or Shire horse?—Certainly not, if I could get the old Irish horse; I prefer the old Irish farm stallion.

5135. There are some still?—They are the horses that get most of the troopers, and the farmer finds it does not pay him to breed from the thoroughbred unless he has got a very big mare; the mares are getting smaller and he has to go to the Clydesdale or Shire for size.

5136. Do they work the mares?—Yes, they cannot afford to breed unless they do.

5137. They don't work the young ones?—No, they are sold as long tails, untrained, three or four years old.

5137A. Are there a sufficient number of sires in your district?—I think there are plenty.

5138. Do they suit the district?—There are too many thoroughbreds—at least—plenty of them, and the great thing that is wanting is the old Irish stallion. I have got a Shire stallion myself, and he is much approved of because he is short-legged and has good action. I find some of his progeny has been used to breed hunters, and I have a firm belief they will breed good hunters with good action. I know one or two that are likely to look very well before the judges at the show as weight-carriers.

5139. You don't know how they will turn out in the field?—The Dublin Society don't in any way guarantee that a horse will stand up in the field.

5140. What chiefly influences a farmer in your district in sending his mare to the sire?—The farmers are influenced by cheapness; they will send to the nearest horse whatever he may happen to be, and will give £1, but the better class who have a fancy for breeding and have been breeding for a great number of years are very particular about their sires.

5141. They don't mind the fee if they get the right sire?—They don't mind the fee; they will give £3 readily and £5 in some cases.

5142. Was there not a horse in your district called "Prince Imperial"?—Yes.

5143. Can you describe him?—He is pretty near the old Irish stallion; a big Irish cart horse; clean on the heels; over 16 hands; he has good action, and is able to carry 18 stone to hounds.

5144. What sort of stock has he got?—I have seen a good many of his foals; I have got one myself; they are not sufficiently old to tell what they are going to turn out, but they look well; they are rather disappointing as to size, but that may be because of the farmers putting small mares to the horse because he is a big horse.

5145. Where did he come from?—He belongs to Mr. M'Mahon, of the Colt Stud Farm. He and his father have owned stallions for years, and he told me he got this horse from somewhere in the mountainous district of Tipperary, and he gave me his pedigree; no doubt he may not be a pure old Irish stallion, but he is the next thing to it; he has got none of the Clydesdale or Shire in him.

5146. A clean legged cart horse?—Yes, that is what we want.

5147. Have the prices gone up or down in your district?—The price of good weight-carrying hunters is as high as ever. I saw some last week, and they were asking £200 for their five-year-olds, and only bought from the farmers around; the price for them is as good as ever and better, but the price for small horses is not so good.

5146. A good horse is easily sold?—A good horse is easily sold. There is a buyer for Mr. Hames, of Leicestershire, will buy up good weight-carrying horses as fast as he can get them.

5147. What is your opinion of the half-bred?—I don't think the half-bred exists in this country; they are all mongrels.

5148. You would not put the old Irish horse you talk of under the definition of a half-bred?—No, the half-bred is a sort of mongrel; nobody knows how he is bred; he may have a cross with a thoroughbred in him; they don't exist, I think. What I would understand by a half-bred is a first cross between a Clydesdale and a thoroughbred, or a first cross between a Shire and a thoroughbred, or a first cross between a Hackney and a race horse.

5149. Anything that is a first cross between two pure breeds?—Yes.

5190. Would you be in favour of the Royal Dublin Society registering some of these stallions you talk about?—I would not exactly put it that way. I would be in favour of establishing a stud book for weight-carrying hunters. I have written to the *Field* and also to many papers as much as twenty-five years ago upon the subject, advocating the formation of a stud book for weight-carrying hunters, and the method I proposed was that the Royal Dublin Society should give prizes for weight-carrying hunters to be entires. I consider a great deal of money is thrown away by giving prizes to weight-carrying hunters that cannot propagate their race; it doesn't encourage anything, and does no good except getting the owner a good prize for his horse. It would be much better if they gave some of the money to weight-carrying hunters to be entire, reserved for breeding, and entered in the stud book for weight-carrying hunters.

5151. You would register sires as well as mares?—Certainly. The principle of breeding I have recommended is like sire and like dam—the same principle that is adopted in breeding every kind of stock; the shorthorns were bred from an original family; they only used like sire and dam; in the various breeds of sheep it is like sire and like dam, and the Hackneys, who have a complete Stud Book now, originated in a small number of animals, and now they are becoming a pure breed; also the race horse was not a pure bred originally; because originally from four different animals, the Arab, the Turk, the old English mare, and the Barb.

5152. You suggest forming a breed of hunters?—Yes, in the same way that you form a breed of race

horses, breeding in from the members of the same family until you get a breed of a permanent type in the same way that Booth and Bates bred shorthorns from a small family until they got them to be a permanent type, and until they got excellence and size, and everything else.

5153. The land about your district apparently doesn't breed bone?—It doesn't; part of it does; it is not the breeding altogether that makes the bone it is the grass as well.

5154. Horses bred on most of your district are not inclined to breed bone?—Half and half. You must give your young horses oats in the winter to make them grow, a good deal is limestone land where horses will grow to a good size with plenty of bone.

5155. Do the farmers treat their young horses well?—They do, those that fancy breeding. Of course there are some poorer farmers that cannot afford to do it, but those who follow their own horses treat them well, and keep them out all the winter on the best of grass, and give them plenty of hay and some oats occasionally.

5156. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You talked about the old Irish stallion—I forget if you told us if you could trace his pedigree in any way how he was originally bred?—He was originally bred very simply, he was the old Irish pack horse that was bred on the mountains, and was used for carrying packs. There was no introduction of English blood, but they have been crossed so often that it is hard to find the old Irish blood, but there is a good deal of it still.

5157. Do you think it could be traced?—Yes, I think so. I believe I could pick out a half-dozen myself.

5158. And this horse "Prince Imperial," you say you have got this horse's pedigree—can you give it?—No. You will have to ask Mr. M'Mahon for that.

5159. Without knowing the names of the animals he is bred from you know how he is bred?—He told me he was bred in a mountainous part where they had a good deal of the old Irish stock.

5160. Yet you say his foals are small?—I could not judge from one individual of that class, but I have known several old Irish horses that got magnificent big horses; there were some in the district around me some years ago, the old Irish, and they got splendid big horses, that were very good for troopers and also the mares for breeding hunters.

5161. You say the mares round you have deteriorated you think in size, don't you think that to a great extent is from the farmer selling the good produce and keeping the bad?—I think it is the want of large sized stallions.

5162. Is it a fact that they have sold their best mares—that they don't keep their best mares?—I don't think they do; they like to sell their colts; if they have a good mare they will work her on the farm and keep her for breeding, but the difficulty is to get the mare big enough owing to the scarcity of old Irish blood.

5163. Suppose you cannot obtain the old Irish blood, would you object to an animal—a half-bred—but you seem to think there is no such thing?—I don't know what you would describe as that.

5164. What I should call a well-bred hunter—would you object to breed from that?—No, I think he is a good animal but he requires improving on the system I have recommended by giving prizes for weight-carrying hunters—entire—you would have to subsidise them in some way.

5165. I think you would have to subsidise the rider too. I don't think you would get any great number of gentlemen to hunt these entire horses?—You would not require a very great number of them and they would not be kept for hunting; it would be a limited class; a small number would be sufficient to start the breed. I think that for breeding weight-carrying hunters the first way is the best, and that would be to have a stud book for them and make a pure breed of them, but the second best way is to breed from the large Irish mare from the thoroughbred, but your difficulty is to get a large Irish mare, and you cannot get that without encouraging the Irish breed.

5166. To make up a new breed would take a long time?—It would.

5167. How many years—how many generations would you require?—I wrote an essay for Lord Calthorpe twenty-five years ago in which I advocated this—the establishment of a stud for weight-carrying hunters of pure breed, and I think if adopted then during that thirty years the breed would have become pretty well established by this. But the prize for that essay was given to the mongrel system of breeding—consistent crossing—which I condemn. When you breed pointers or setters or foxhounds you don't cross the bloodhound with the greyhound to produce the foxhound—you breed from foxhound sire and foxhound dam, and therefore you get a pure-bred animal that will propagate his race. Why not have the same principle when dealing with the most valuable animal of all, the horse.

5168. Mr. CAREW.—You say there are some Irish bred sires in the country now?—Yes; a few.

5169. You know two?—There is one in my district now. I knew of several some years ago.

5170. You would utilize these for propagating this hunter sire with the Irish bred mare?—Yes; I think in time you could get sufficient of them.

5171. You have tried Irish bred mares?—Yes.

5172. How are they bred?—I bought the dam of one from a farmer who had had the breed for generations, and this was a foal got by a Welsh horse. I consider that the Welsh cart-horse is the nearest thing to the old Irish, and that the old Irish mares might be improved by the cross of the Welsh cart-horse; that is an animal used to mountains; he is not so heavy as the English cart-horse, and not so heavy at the heels. You might very safely use him with the old Irish mare for re-establishing a breed similar to the old Irish breed; that is, a breed of horse used to mountains, with activity, which gives jumping powers, which produce the hunter. The other mare was by "Knight of St. Patrick" that I am breeding from. I believe he was an old Irish horse.

5173. A hunter sire?—No, a farm horse.

5174. And you think if the Royal Dublin Society subsidised this form of breeding it would improve the breed of horses generally?—Yes, they might improve them by a cross with the Welsh cart horse. I have seen the progeny of the Welsh cart horse—that is a big strong horse with plenty of bone and activity to go up and down mountains which gives the jumping power.

5175. And you find that there is as good a price obtainable for the weight-carrying hunter now as ever?—Yes, weight. I make another suggestion—that is with regard to Connemara ponies.

5176. You had better keep to your own district?—Because I am using them for years, and I am using them now as hunters. I buy them every year from a dealer that brings down a troop of foals. I buy two or three every year. I have got some now that go to hounds, 14.2 to 15 hands. I can show you two that I don't think can possibly be improved upon for carrying a fair weight over country safely and fast. If you could stereotype that type of Achill and Connemara pony it would be a great thing, and I think the Royal Dublin Society would do well to give prizes for Connemara ponies of that stamp and encourage their breed as much as possible and stereotype that breed. I could show photographs of these ponies.

5177. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you got them with you?—No, but I could send them to the Commission; there is no better shaped animal; he has endurance and his galloping is quite fast enough. I don't think any

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improvement could be made. My daughters ride them and they get safe everywhere. I think probably if any improvement was to be made a cross with a Welsh cob stallion used with these Connemara ponies would improve the breed; it would preserve their present character which is the character of the mountain pony, and which gives jumping power, activity, hardiness, endurance and strength—everything you can possibly want, and the Welsh cobs about the same size 14 to 15 hands, they have the same qualities, and if you can send some of these Welsh cobs, that would breed up to 15 hands, to Connemara it would be a very fine thing. I have a half Hackney that I bought last year and I don't like it at all; it has lost all the qualities of the Connemara, it has got into a long, lengthy, leggy thing, and I have seen a good many of them. I think Hackneys would spoil the Connemara ponies.

5178. CHAIRMAN.—Did you buy him out of the drove?—Yes, and the man offered some more this year and I would not buy them. I think the breed would be entirely altered by introducing the plain horse like the Hackney to the mountain horse. If you cross the mountain horse with the plain horse you lose the jumping qualities, and entirely dislocate the frame of the horse and make him all wrong. If you cross the Connemara ponies with the Welsh mountain cob you might improve them.

5179. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Do you think that the small farmer in your district is a capable judge of the breeding of horses—does he understand what he is breeding for?—I think he does.

5180. Has he any particular standard to breed up to, or is it only to get a foal?—He first of all looks to getting the nearest and cheapest horse he can get, but he also can judge what the foal is going to fetch—what he is going to sell it for.

5181. But does he know how to breed with that object?—He exercises some judgment; he won't breed a horse that he thinks will give him a small unsaleable weedy animal; he must get size; some of the farmers have great taste in pairing the animals; they don't want to breed except to sell.

5182. With regard to these Connemara ponies and the difference between what you call the mountain animal and the plain animal—you were some time in India?—Yes.

5183. You have seen the different breeds in India, and how they were attempted to be crossed and improved on?—Yes.

5184. What was your opinion with regard to that?—An utter failure.

5185. In the different districts the indigenous horse remained the best in that particular district?—Certainly.

5186. Under that climate and under those circumstances?—Certainly.

5187. And the general attempt to improve produced another animal that was not equal to the requirements of the indigenous horse in that part of the country?—Certainly, it was a complete failure. The original breed of each district, you might call them thoroughbreds, because they were bred in and in for centuries; each district has its own breed, and they were in and in bred and not crossed, no mongrel creeping in and they were always the best.

5188. I think you were a great deal in Bahar?—No, I was in the Himalayas.

5189. You must have seen the introduction there of the Hackney—or, as it was called here, the Norfolk trotter—the thoroughbred horse, the Arab, the Persian; in fact, the introduction of a great variety of breeds crossed by the indigenous horse of the country?—Yes.

5190. And with regard to the actual cross itself for the service required of it under these climatic conditions, did you find any of these breeds practically improve the animal itself for utility?—I never actually visited one of the Government studs—the Buxar Stud—but I have seen a great many animals that were bred there—the original country mare crossed with the Arab or English racehorse—and, as far as my recollection went, there were general complaints that they were too small. You could not get sufficient size for cavalry purposes by crossing with the Arab or English thoroughbred.

5191. You found that the indigenous horse of that part was the most useful?—Yes, certainly; the hill ponies were something marvellous.

5192. Mr. WRENCH.—You would not compare the climate in India with the climate in Ireland—the thoroughbred going to India is much more out of his element than the thoroughbred horse going to Ireland?—No; I think the thoroughbred thrives very well in India.

5193. I thought you said his gets were not so good—his produce, I mean?—They are too small.

5194. Therefore India would hardly be a fair comparison with Ireland?—No, scarcely.

5195. The extremes of heat and cold are so much greater?—Yes.

5196. Do you think if the breeding in Ireland had been confined to the old Irish horse that the same hunters would have been produced that are now being produced by the thoroughbred?—I don't quite understand.

5197. If you kept on breeding from these Irish mares and stallions, would you have produced the same hunters that you have now?—I have never excluded the introduction of the thoroughbred; it is the first cross with the old Irish mare. That, I think, is the proper way of breeding weight-carrying hunters.

5198. India is no comparison for Ireland because you admit that the thoroughbred has been a great advantage?—Certainly.

5199. You cannot compare India with Ireland?—I can compare it in this way, that I consider the old Irish horse, where if he had remained pure like in the Island of Achill, where the animals have been bred in and in for centuries, the mares running with the colts on the mountains, and no cross of any extraneous blood—I think these animals possess the hardy qualities I spoke of before with reference to the horses in India.

5200. Have you been to Achill lately?—No.

5201. Do you know the sires in Achill have for the last few years been crossed with cart horses in order to obtain size?—No, I don't know that.

5202. Do you know that no pure Achill ponies still exist in the way of sires?—I cannot tell you; the man I bought them from told me the mares were running with their own brothers and sisters on the mountain, and were bred that way.

5203. This man is a dealer who buys and gives a pedigree in order to obtain a market?—I didn't ask him much about his pedigrees. I can judge by appearance. I would not, of course, rely on all that he tells me.

5204. Except for his telling you that these animals you bought were by the Hackney you don't know that?—No.

5205. Do you know the Congested Districts Board have had three Welsh cobs stationed in Connemara for the last two years and one in Achill?—I am glad to hear it. I approve highly of them; it is scarcely time to have seen their stock.

5206. Do you know that the produce of the Hackney and the western pony is much better tempered than the produce of the Welsh cob and the western ponies?—I doubt it.

5207. If you saw it of course you would believe it?—I would. I don't think the Hackney would improve the agreeability of the mount.

5208. Have you much experience of Hackneys?—I rode a thoroughbred Hackney once last season with the York and Ainstey hounds, and I would never get on one again; it was like a ship rolling, and you felt when he galloped that he must fall to pieces, and the first fence he stumbled into it.

5209. How wa s he bred?—Bred by Mr. Dunnington Jefferson.

5210. He is not remarkable for having good Hackneys?—He has a very large stud.

5211. That is at Thicket Priory. You will be glad to hear that we have not bought any of his Hackneys for Ireland?—It is only with reference to the peculiar action of the Hackney. I think the Hackney is a splendid animal for the North of Ireland where they breed carriage horses, but if you want one to improve the riding horses or the hunter I would not approve of them.

5212. If it was decided to buy any of these old Irish stallions, do you think it would be possible to obtain them?—I think it would.

5213. They still exist?—They do; it would take a good deal of ferretting out, but there are farmers who still have the old breed. As I said before I think the Welsh cart horses would help.

5214. I think you said a great many troopers were now bred by half-bred horses?—A great many.

5215. Do you think it has become fashionable to say that a horse is got by a thoroughbred in order to sell him?—I think the farmers speak truthfully what their horses are got by.

5216. Do you think that all the horses in the catalogue of the Royal Dublin Society are got by thoroughbreds?—I don't think so; they get out of the farmers' hands and get pedigrees manufactured to order.

5217. You think you can rely on the farmers?—I think you can generally. I know one instance where a very good hunter has been said to have been got by "King John," but it was not "King John" himself, but a son of his out of an old Irish mare—a half-bred hunter horse—a fine horse he was too, but the farmers said he was by "King John."

5218. He left out the word "son"?—Yes.

5219. From your experience if you don't wish to breed from a particular strain, do you think that buying from the farmers you would be able to find out how they were bred?—You might make plenty of mistakes, but as a rule you would get nearly the truth by going to their houses and talking to them.

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5220. You would alter the rule of the Royal Dublin Society—you would allow entire horses to be shown?—Yes, in a special class to be reserved for breeding.

5221. Would you allow mares to be shown in foal by other horses than thoroughbred?—I would; why should you exclude other horses and only admit the registered ones—I would see what was the best foal.

5222. You think with regard to producing bone and size it is chiefly pasture?—Not altogether.

5223. Climate?—A good deal breeding; pasture as well as breeding; you must have bone in the sire and dam in order to get bone, and that is the reason that you find when breeding too frequently from the race-horse that you lose bone. The average of the race-horse is 7½ inches below the knee; the average of the weight-carrying hunter is 9½ inches; if you breed from 7½ inches you cannot get 9½ inches.

5224. Nine and a half inches is a big average?—I would like to have my sire nine and a half inches. All the crossing in the world won't give them bone unless it is in the sire.

5225. Supposing you brought a breed from England—thoroughbreds or Hackneys—do you think you could produce that better in Ireland than England owing to the soil and climate?—I think you can if the young stock are treated well and are well fed, I think they probably would grow bigger here.

5226. Don't you think this country would grow better horses of any kind?—No doubt, the Irish horses are more active because they are grazed on land, frequently mountain land, with broken down fences which they are always jumping, and then when they come to be trained they know all about a ditch, a bog, banks, water, and everything else. The English hunter is grazed all his life in a square paddock with hedges around it, and knows nothing but a plain piece of grass, and has got to be taught all the jumping qualities.

DESMOND FITZGERALD, Turlough Lodge, Castlebar.

Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald

5227. CHAIRMAN.—You live in county Mayo?—Yes.

5228. You farm a good deal?—I do.

5229. Do you breed any horses yourself?—I have bred a great many horses at different times, but I gave it up some time since, when my sons went abroad and I had no one to ride them.

5230. Are there plenty of horses bred in the district around you?—A good number.

5231. What class of mares are in the district?—They are a poor class, running between 14 and 15 hands as a rule.

5232. What part of the county are you in?—Turlough, near Castlebar.

5233 They are a small class of mares as a rule?—Yes; I am speaking of the country mares between 14 and 15 hands high.

5234. Are there suitable stallions in the district for these mares?—I do not think there are; there are a great many small country stallions that are used by the people, and a great many of these are half Clyde, or half Suffolk—in fact, scrub I would call them.

5235. In the mountainy districts of Mayo what do they breed?—Well, ponies, a sort of rough pony; there is no particular type of them.

5236. In fact, they are crossed every way?—They are crossed every way. When I was young there was a particular type all through Connemara and Achill—all along the seaboard, and at that time you could have gone into the fair of Westport or Newport, and got any number of most perfect miniature little horses, pictures they were, of this particular type. These were running between 12½ and 13½ hands high. Then there was a cross of this half bred Suffolk and half-bred Clydesdale brought in to make them larger, and destroyed the whole breed of ponies. They were more like the Welsh ponies at that time. There is hardly any of the old type of Connemara pony now pure.

5237. Can you call them ponies at all?—Oh, yes, I should call them so. They run from 13½ to 14 hands—14.1 perhaps.

5238. You think the horses have deteriorated considerably from the old type?—The ponies I speak of certainly have.

5239. Are you in the mountainy district?—I am near the mountains, near Westport.

5240. Then they have deteriorated there certainly?—Oh, certainly they have. I am speaking of Connemara and Achill ponies—the mountainy ponies. You get, no doubt, good ponies now and again down there, but they are the exception, the general run are scrub.

5241. What class of stallion would you recommend to be used?—I think the Congested Districts Board's sires are good, indeed, for the purpose they are put to on the seaboard. I bought some of their foals as an experiment myself, and they turned out well.

5242. What age?—They are coming four. They are, I suppose, 14.2 to 14.3. I should think about that height, or perhaps they might go to 15.

5243. What sires have the Congested Districts Board there?—Hackney sires.

5244. You bought the produce?—I bought them in the fairs of Newport as an experiment, and have also bred myself, not from the Congested Districts Board sires, but there was a Hackney sire brought

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over by Mr. Mitchell, who lives in Tourmakeady, and I used him with small Connemara ponies, and got wonderful good ponies, about 13.3.

5245. What horse was that?—Star of the West.

5246. Did you sell any of this stock at all?—No. I have got some now. They are all good; there is one of them the best I ever followed in my life.

5247. In the trap?—In the trap or as a fencer; he used to carry one of my sons, 10½ stone, with the stag hounds.

5248. Do farmers in your district appreciate the advantage of good stallions?—I think they do. The Royal Dublin Society's stallion is too far away from them to use down there in my district. I suppose he is fourteen or fifteen miles away.

5249. In your immediate district?—In my immediate district. They are, as I said before, some of these half-bred horses. Some half-bred horses from Lothario, a thoroughbred horse; some from "Ballinafad," another thoroughbred horse; and from "Sago," down there now.

5250. Will they pay a decent fee for the sire?—Well, I could hardly say that. I should say they would be willing to pay £1. I am speaking of the farmers.

5251. Take the ordinary farmer, is he more influenced by the fee than by the making of the horse?—I think so.

5252. More by the fee?—I am sure the small farmers will not put their mares to any horse, no matter how good he is, if they have to pay large fees. The foals are sent away at six months old. A large number of foals are sold in the market at six months old, and go away in droves.

5253. The thoroughbred horses you have got, are they close to you?—I suppose about nine or ten miles.

5254. Do you think they are suitable for the district at all?—I think they are. I am speaking now of the sire that belongs to the Royal Dublin Society.

5255. Do you think he will suit well for the mares of the district?—I think he would. There are not a great many mares; there is a great dearth of mares suitable for breeding hunters.

5256. Is the Dublin Society Scheme in operation in your district?—It is; I think it does good, but I think it is a mistake to have them always located in the one place. I think the Dublin Society's horse, the Government horse, ought to be moved about from one part of the district to another each year, so that each part might get a fair chance. Of course the present system is to register the horses that are suitable to get good produce indiscriminately of where they are. We have a great number. There was Mr. Blake, down at Ballinafad, used to breed any number of horses, and kept good sires. Unfortunately we have lost him, and there is a dearth of thoroughbred sires.

5257. Have you any experience of the work of the Congested Districts Board Scheme in your neighbourhood?—I think they have done a great deal of good.

5258. Do you think the people are getting a better price for the young stock since the Hackney stallion was introduced?—I can hardly say that, because the large majority of the foals go away at six months.

5259. Do they get a better price for the foals?—Perhaps a few shillings. Say a half sovereign.

5260. And you think the Hackney stallion is suitable to mate with mares in the district?—Very much so. I think the thoroughbred horses would not suit at all to be put with these mountainy ponies. I think you would have a number of weeds.

5261. Do the farmers keep the best mares?—No, I am sorry to say they don't; they sell them; the best looking fillies are all sold away, and the very worst are kept.

5262. Have you any suggestion you could make to remedy that?—The only thing I can think of is giving premiums to mares of, say, four or five years old.

5265. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say these Mayo ponies, do you call them Mayo or Connemara?—They are usually called Connemara ponies, it is the district on the seaboard.

5264. Years ago you say they were the perfect thing?—Of a perfect type.

5265. And you would like if you could to reproduce that type?—I think it would be far superior to what they are now, but I do not think there is any likelihood of its being done.

5266. You would like to do it if it could be done?—I should, they were a perfect pony; in fact very much like the Welsh pony, but there is hardly one of this class got now.

5267. You think the introduction of the Welsh pony blood would be a good thing?—Well, the mares now are such real scrub that it is very hard to say, and we all know how mares throw back. It is very hard to say what the progeny would be from the Welsh sire.

5268. They were you say derived from a perfect type of pony?—Originally.

5269. And they will throw back to that good type, won't they?—I am afraid we will have to wait a long time before we get back to that type.

5270. But you must make a beginning. How would you set about it?—I think these Hackneys are very suitable for the mares they have now.

5271. And you would prefer them to the Welsh?—I think so.

5272. Why?—So far as I can see of the ones I have got myself, the produce of the Hackney, they have very good action, good knee action, reaching, and good hock action.

5273. And they were a breed which had a great deal of the Arab blood in them?—There was Arab blood in them originally, far back.

5274. And do you think the grafting of this new blood into them would be a good thing?—I think it will produce certainly a more useful animal than is there now.

5275. But if you say they were nearly perfect and they were like the Welsh pony, why do you not like the idea of grafting the Welsh pony blood on to them again?—I dare say that might answer. I have not seen any of the produce from the Welsh sire. The ones I have seen were from the Hackney.

5276. And you base your opinion on the produce of the Hackney that you have already seen?—Yes; what I have seen.

5277. What number of them have you seen?—I suppose I have seen fifty or sixty of them.

5278. What age?—Some are coming four—they will be four in May next.

5279. And do you believe that the old breed of Connemara pony can be resuscitated?—I should hardly say that. It would take a very long time to do it.

5280. Then you are going to strike out a new breed of them?—The ones that are there now are real scrub, taking the big majority of them. Now and again you can pick out a good pony, but taking the majority they are scrub.

5281. Do you think they are beyond redemption?—Well, I won't say that, it is never too late to mend.

5282. No, and if you are going to mend them, would you not rather try to mend them on the old lines—try to reproduce them on the old lines so far as you know?—You are speaking of the ponies.

5283. Yes; these Connemara ponies that you have been talking about all the time I understand?—Quite so; the same remark applies to the New Forest ponies, they have deteriorated, and they are trying to reproduce them again.

5284. You would not like to re-introduce the Arab strain again with a view of getting courage?—I do not think the Arab is suitable for this cross. I saw a good deal of the Arab blood in Queensland, on the

you have all the machinery at hand, and you will have no trouble but to send down a register, and the Clerk of Petty Sessions could issue this certificate of pedigree, with the marks given at time of birth.

5578. You think many of the horses on the register of the Royal Dublin Society at present are not sound?—I know it.

5579. How would you have their soundness decided, would you send down a vet. from Dublin, or allow the men to select their own vets.?—I am afraid it is almost impossible to test a horse for soundness; one of the best veterinary surgeons in Ireland said he never saw a sound horse yet, or, in other words, he never saw a horse he could not spin.

5580. How would you remedy that state of affairs?—I would register them in the district, and let the farmers see for themselves what certificate they held, what they have done, who signs the certificate, and the date of it.

5581. You would not require any special examination by a central body?—No, because I know the farmers in our district are some of the keenest judges of a horse, and they can pick the sires to suit their mares; I know one small farmer who has travelled the County Cork looking for a sire.

5582. Are they keen judges of vets., too?—Oh, they know the vets., that is why I say when they would have the vet.'s certificate, and the date of it, they would know what reliance they could place on it

5583. CHAIRMAN.—You say you got some of the best horses from these weedy sires, don't you think the land has something to do with that?—I think it has, for in the County Limerick we grow some of the biggest men, and biggest horses, and biggest bullocks in the world.

5584. Have you any more suggestions to make to the Commission?—There is one matter, I think if you take away the Queen's Plates, you have seventeen Queen's Plates given to racing every year, that is £1,700, and those Queen's Plates are usually won by one or two racing men. They are given for the improvement of the breed of horses in Ireland, but they are no value, I think, as a means to that end. In 1893 Mr. Linde won seven, in 1894 he won ten of them, in 1895 he won eight, and, I am sorry to say, in 1896 he only won two. He won twenty-seven out of sixty-eight plates in four years—that is £2,700.

5585. What would you suggest to do with that, use it to help to make a registry of sires?—Either that, or give it to the different county shows. If £100, the value of one plate, was given to Limerick—for in Limerick we have been losing money for years since the show was started; it is the same in Cork, and I believe everywhere else—if that £100 was given as prizes for young mares at the different shows I think it would be a great means of inducing the farmers to keep their young mares and exhibit them there.

5586. Do the farmers send their mares to the Royal Dublin Society's mare shows?—Yes; it is not availed of though as much as it ought to be.

5587. You don't remember the number of mares that put in an appearance?—I was at Bruff Show this year. I judged at Ennis Show this year and last year, and the mares shown there this year were far better than the ones shown last year. I believe that is because the farmers saw they had not the slightest chance with the rubbish they brought there the year before.

5588. It has done good in that way?—It has done good in that way. Then the class at Ennis was confined to mares under four years. I was very glad to see them doing that.

5589. In the County Limerick?—In the County Limerick; Mr. Fitzgerald has told you all about that. I agree with him altogether.

5590. Is there anything else you want to say?—Just one thing. I was surprised to hear the Congested Districts Board's stallions had covered something like 100 mares last year.

5591. It is hardly in your district?—I don't know whether it is a fact or not, but I think there is nothing so injurious in horse-breeding as an overdone stallion.

5592. That would not refer to your district?—It does refer to my district.

5593. You are not in a congested district?—No; but as to stallions being overdone, I have known several stallions who in the first season got extraordinary good foals, the first crop of them. There was a rush on him then, and the stallion was over-let; the owner of the stallion would not turn away any mares, and some of the horses covered as many as 120 mares; their produce afterwards was utterly worthless, and I think you should devise some means to prevent stallion owners allowing more than sixty or seventy mares to their horse.

5594. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know as a matter of fact that Hackneys are able to cover a much larger number of mares than other horses?—I think a horse if you let him will go on covering for ever.

5595. Do you know that stallions in Yorkshire cover 100 mares in a year, and some of them 120?—Those are travelling stallions.

5596. CHAIRMAN.—You mean to infer that if the stallions are not limited the progeny is inferior after a bit?—Unless they are limited.

5597. Mr. WRENCH.—What would you limit stallions to as a rule?—Not more than seventy. A stallion getting 200 mares, which I have heard of, means at least 260 covers, and as the covering season is only three months, it is at the rate of four a day

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

Nov. 27, 1896.

ELEVENTH DAY.—FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH, 1896.

Present:—LORD ASHTOWN (in the Chair); LORD RATHDONNEL, THE HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, MR. WRENCH, COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. R. E. Going.

Mr. R. E. GOING, Cragg, Newport, examined.

5598. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Limerick?—I live in Tipperary, just on the borders of the County of Limerick.

5599. You have considerable experience in horse breeding?—Yes.

5560. What class have you chiefly bred yourself?—Half-bred hunters—that is, hunter mares, crossed thoroughbreds.

5561. What do you call hunter mares?—Mares with a couple of crosses of thoroughbred blood. Some have only half-bred blood, but mares who have been hunted, and have proved themselves good hunters.

5562. That is the class of mares you breed from?—Yes, and I have also bred from cart mares—at least mares who have been drawing carts and doing farm work—and I have bred once or twice from Clydesdale stallions and good mares, and I have also bred from mares crossed with Clydesdale blood.

5563. With what sires?—Thoroughbred sires.

5564. Have you bought any horses?—Yes, a considerable number.

5565. At what age do you chiefly buy?—Four years. I have bought younger, but, as a rule, four.

5566. What do you do with them?—Sell them again.

5567. What class of horses is chiefly bred in your district?—Well, they aim at breeding hunters. The small farmers, I don't think, have any very clear idea as to what they are trying to breed.

5568. What class of horse is most suitable to breed in your district?—I think hunters—high-class hunters—and carriage or harness horses.

5569. And what class of mares?—Hunter mares.

5570. Do they work the mares, or do they keep them simply to breed?—You mean turn them out in the field? As a rule, they work them, but some farmers keep them simply for breeding.

5571. What sires do they chiefly use?—Thoroughbred sires.

5572. Altogether?—They generally do. The farmers that aim at breeding the best horses only breed from thoroughbred sires. Of course they may breed from horses with a slight stain. The smaller farmers breed from half-breds, and a large number of them breed in a haphazard kind of way from anything they get cheap.

5573. Do they breed from two-year-old fillies?—I don't think they do much. I don't think in that country the two-year-old fillies would be able to breed; they are underfed.

5574. You don't approve of breeding from two-year-old fillies?—It depends altogether on the country where it is tried. If it is tried in a very rich county—Kildare or Meath, or in a good part of Limerick—it may be very successful, but not in the North Riding of Tipperary. I don't think the farmers feed the fillies enough to make them able to nurse a foal.

5575. Do they take any trouble about mating the sire and the mare together?—Some do, but I think anywhere out of a hunting country they breed more or less in a haphazard way. They are not judges of the horses they send to, and they do whatever the next man may tell them.

5576. Are they influenced by the lowness of the fee?—The lowness of the fee! Well, the small farmers are guided very largely by the lowness of the fee, but I know some farmers who are quite ready to pay £2 10s. or £3, and I know farmers to give as high as £5, but I think that is the outside that any of them would or could go.

5577. Do you know do they breed from cart or draught stallions, Clydesdales or Shires?—No, I don't think so. About Lower Ormond part of Tipperary, of which I know also a good deal, they have a sort of half bred Clydesdale, but I don't know of any really pure bred Clydesdales there.

5578. Is the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society operating in your part of the country?—In some parts of the districts I know it is.

5579. Has it taken on at all?—I don't think it has done any good. I think the district is too remote for it to do much good.

5580. Do the farmers send the mares to the shows?—Well, I believe they do, but I don't think it does much good. I don't think it is sufficiently used to have any great effect for or against.

5581. What breed of stallion do you recommend for that district?—Thoroughbred sires. I should not object to a very slight stain, I mean if a horse is not eligible, such a horse as Mayboy, or Lawyer, Silk Gown, or Reliable, I would not object to such horses, but, as a general rule, I recommend thoroughbreds.

5582. Would you allow the half-bred horses you name amongst the registered sires of the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes, I would not object to their being registered, but to the ordinary half-bred sires, what is generally called half-bred sires in the country, I would object very much.

5583. The mongrel half-bred?—Yes, to a thoroughbred horse with a stain who is not eligible for entry as a thoroughbred, but is to all intents and purposes thoroughbred, I would not object.

5584. Do the farmers sell their best mares, or do they keep any good mares in your district?—They sell them.

5585. If they can get the money for them?—Yes.

5586. Can you suggest any way of preventing the farmers from doing that?—No, I don't think it would be possible, I don't think if a farmer has a mare sufficiently good to keep her as a hunter breeding mare, I don't think he could possibly refuse the price that that mare would be worth. I think if he is offered £60 or £70, no farmer in my district would refuse that for a mare out of the collar.

5587. There is no scheme that you can suggest to tempt the farmers to keep their good mares?—Not to keep their fillies; I have put on paper some suggestions that have occurred to me.

5588. Will you kindly read them?—*Reading*—

"SCHEME FOR IMPROVING THE BREED OF HUNTERS IN IRELAND.

"1. That Ireland being peculiarly suited for the breeding and training of high class hunters and harness horses, State aid given towards horse-breeding should be devoted to the production of these classes alone. 2. That good brood mares are much needed in Ireland. 3. That it is hopeless to try to induce farmers not to sell their best fillies, as no farmer could afford to refuse the price these mares are worth. 4. That Government should aid farmers in securing hunter mares of a really high class, incapacitated by accidents for fast work, as brood mares, and that such mares should be bought in England by the Dublin Society and distributed to farmers by means of local committees. 5. That the mares be paid for in instalments extending over two years. The farmer to give security for the

money. 6. That only Irish bred mares be bought for this purpose. 7. That arrangements be made for placing mares quiet enough for work with small farmers, and mares unfit for work with farmers able to afford idle brood mares. 8. That a registry of mares be opened, and all approved brood mares now in Ireland, together with those to be bought, be entered therein. 9. That thoroughbred sires be registered as at present, but that a higher standard of excellence be adopted, and that each year the least good sires be removed from the register. 10. That a horse with a stain in his pedigree but having proved himself to be a good sire or having run well on the turf, be eligible for registration. 11. That the fee proposed to be charged for each stallion be approved of by the Dublin Society, having regard to the circumstances of the farmers in that district, and that the society pay half that fee for all registered mares going to the stallion."

5589. That is your scheme. You say only buy Irish-bred mares, but if you go to buy mares in England it would be very hard to say that they were Irish-bred mares?—It would be very hard to be absolutely certain in every case, but I don't think it would be impossible to work it if you were in touch with the large dealers. There are several big dealers who buy a good many hunters in Ireland; I think they would be very happy to really honestly assist in anything in the way of getting to know where those mares went to. If, for instance, a mare was broken down, as is often the case in the first season's hunting, I think the dealers in communication with a central society would pick up that horse for them for breeding purposes. I don't mean old, worn out, and utterly broken down animals, but mares that have met with an accident.

5590. You mean that the Government should give an extra grant for the supply of a better breed of mares in the country?—I suppose some extra grant would require to be given, but I don't think the money given in prizes does a great deal of good.

5591. You think the present system of giving prizes is not working well?—I think the other system would work better. The thing that really attracts a man in horse breeding is not getting a prize of £5 or £10—and it is only a chance if he gets the prize—but in the other case they can all get colts, and if they sell them they are sure of the money. In the first case it is only a chance of getting the £5 or £10.

5592. Do you think as to the stallion fee that the farmers would pay a sufficient fee to enable the owner to keep a good stallion?—I know in a good many districts in the North Riding of Tipperary generally I don't think it would pay to keep a good stallion for the fees that can be got, and that is the part I am talking about principally.

5593. That is why you mention that a certain portion of this fee should be supplied?—Yes, but at the same time I think if those farmers had better brood mares and had sold good colts it would encourage them to give higher fees, but then of course that is looking a good way into the future.

5594. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—What fee do you think the farmers in your district could be fairly expected to pay for the service of a good stallion?—I don't think it would pay a man to import a really good thoroughbred stallion and keep him for mares under three guineas.

5595. What do you think in the market, either here or in England, a stallion suitable for the mares in your district could be bought for—have you formed any idea?—No, I have not, because I believe there are very few classes of animals in which there are greater variations of price than in stallions. A stallion worth very little as a race horse might be got very cheap as a hunter sire.

5596. They are very cheap just now?—Well, I don't think a bad thoroughbred stallion would be any advantage.

5597. You would not object to a well bred half-bred stallion?—No; a horse with a stain. I know some of them who have got extremely well. The horse "Mackintosh" in Limerick, I was for years under the impression was a thoroughbred, but he is not, and he gets extremely well.

5598. He is not a thoroughbred?—I was for years under the impression he was, and I would have gladly sent to him as a thoroughbred.

5599. You would like to see the money spent on mares, to a certain extent, that is used now in subsidising stallions on the understanding that the stallions serve a certain number of mares at a low fee?—Well, I would look, I think, to the mares. The mares are the main point.

5600. You think the mares are the main point?—I don't think the stallions, no matter how good they may be, can do much good in the country unless the standard of the mares be kept up.

5601. Do you think looking at the small amount that is now distributed for mares that the present system is a satisfactory way of utilising the money that is available?—I cannot say that it has affected my district much, but I have heard that it works well in other districts.

5602. Should you be afraid of the blood of the Hackney or Cleveland stallions which stood in a district adjoining yours permeating your district, and do you think that the cross so produced would eventually do harm to the breed of horses?—Oh! I think they would. Possibly they would not come in as sires.

5603. No, but if they came into the district as half-bred mares?—Well, I would rather they did not come in, and I think it is very likely they would come in. I know some years ago an effort was made by Scotch farmers in North Tipperary to bring over Clydesdale and Shire horses, and they bred a good many of them, and I believe they did a great deal of mischief. The first cross was undeniably a hairy heeled mare that nobody could mistake. Generally, they crossed with a thoroughbred and then they got a good-looking horse, very nice to look at until you went to ride him, then he shut up and was always a cur. I am certain that a great deal of mischief has been done in the Dublin Show by the men getting horses on the lines I have mentioned. They have been brought up and trimmed and look well, and an Englishman buying one of them there says after he tries it "These are the Irish hunters we hear so much about," and the wretched brutes shut up. Very good-looking horses won prizes at the Dublin Show and they were excessively bad hunters. There are three cases in my mind of excessively bad hunters and yet they have won prizes again and again at the Dublin Show, and they looked quite deserving of the prizes too. I don't think any judge could have passed them over in the ring, and at the same time they were extremely bad hunters.

5604. Then you believe it would be a dangerous experiment to introduce any foreign blood into Ireland that had not a strong admixture of thoroughbred?—I would prefer not seeing it introduced for the reasons I have stated.

5605. Mr. Wrench.—In answer to the last question you stated that you would prefer that no blood should be introduced into Ireland that had not a strong admixture of thoroughbred?. Are you aware that the Yorkshire Hackneys have a strong admixture of thoroughbred blood?—I was not speaking of Hackneys.

5606. I know, but Hackneys were referred to I understand that you do not yourself know that Hackneys have a strong admixture of thoroughbred blood?—I do not.

5607. You don't know much about their breeding?—No, I do not.

5608. Do you know whether the three horses that turned out so badly, that were really bad hunters and got prizes at the Dublin Show, had much Clydesdale blood in them?—I have a strong impression that two of them had. My impression is that the horses were not bred as they were stated to have been bred.

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5609. That is not an uncommon thing?—I don't know. I should say not.

5610. You could not detect it by looking at them?—No, I don't think I could. That is where the mischief lies.

5611. Therefore horses may be bred out of a Clydesdale and you would not know there was such a strain in them?—I believe they could.

5612. In those suggestions you have made, in the first of them you say you would only give State aid to those classes of horses that produce high class hunters or harness horses?—Yes.

5613. You would give no State aid to small farmers who either because of their circumstances or land could not breed good horses?—I don't think so in the case of the very small or very poor farmers. It may be worth his while to breed polo ponies, but I really don't know much about polo ponies—in fact I know nothing at all about them—but I don't believe in the case of small farmers it would ever be worth while to assist them to breed horses.

5614. Therefore you would not help them at all?—I would, I think, assist them to breed ponies, but I would not assist them to breed horses. I don't think it is in their interest.

5615. In No. 8, you suggest that a registry of mares be opened, and all approved mares now in Ireland, together with those to be bought, be entered therein. Have you considered when you opened the registry how you would work it?—Well, I don't see why it should not be worked on the same lines as the registry of stallions is now worked. I believe the way it is done is that an Inspector is sent down, and he makes a return of the stallions inspected.

5616. Would not that be a huge work for the Dublin Society to undertake to register the number of good mares in the country?—No. I think the mares could be collected at the shows, and they would send down an Inspector.

5617. Would you propose to leave it to the central body and not to the counties;—I think they should work through the county committees, but they might send the Inspector down. Of course these are matters of detail.

5618. I thought you might have considered the details?—Well, I have. My idea generally would be to collect the mares at the shows, very much as is done for the prizes that are given now, and if the mare was known to have bred good colts it would be registered.

5619. In the first instance, you would register them by appearance?—Or by having bred good colts. I would be chary about registering any except high-class ones.

5620. In the registry you could obtain particulars of how the different mares were bred?—Yes.

5621. They would be recorded in the books kept? Certainly.

5622. If a registry of mares were adopted, would there be any danger of unsuitable blood getting in amongst the brood mares of the country?—After registering them?

5623. Yes.—Well, I think the registry would not prevent unsuitable blood creeping in.

5624. Could not it be traced then?—It would simplify the tracing of it.

5625. Having the registry established you would be able to trace the breeding of the animals?—I think so.

5626. Do you think it would put up the price of animals of that class if the dealer or buyer could tell how the particular animal was bred?—I certainly think if the dealer was absolutely sure of the breeding of the animal he would give more for it.

5627. Do you think it would put up the price of hunters in Ireland?—I think a great many horses would fetch higher prices.

5628. Do you think that a good deal of general information given as to animals in the catalogue of the Dublin Show is not absolutely reliable?—Well, I don't see how it could be absolutely reliable, because I have seen in the catalogue "breeder unknown," "pedigree so and so," and how is the exhibitor to get the pedigree if the breeder is unknown

5629. And do you think if the breeding of the mares was registered the pedigrees could be traced?—Yes.

5630. CHAIRMAN.—When you formed your registry of mares would you register the produce of those mares?—Well, that is forming a Hunter Stud Book.

5631. Would you do that?—I think it would be a very good thing to do.

5632. If you did not do that you would not get any further?—I don't see any objections to doing that.

5633. When you had formed the register of mares and register of sires you would be in favour of entering the produce of these mares by registered sires?—Yes, I would; that is very much on the lines of the Hunter Improvement Society in England I believe.

5634. So that there could be a guaranteed pedigree given of these horses?—Yes.

5635. Mr. WRENCH.—I want to ask you one more question—you think that the first step in improving the horses in your district is improving the brood mares?—Unquestionably, I don't believe it is possible to work it altogether through the sires to improve from a very bad stock, and I believe the registration of mares would do a great deal of good.

Mr. E. C. Winter, v.s.

Mr. E. C. WINTER, v.s., examined.

5636. CHAIRMAN.—You are a veterinary surgeon and live in the county of Limerick?—Yes.

5637. Have you any personal experience of the breeding of horses?—Yes, I have bred some horses, and my father bred horses, and my brother is still breeding them.

5638. What class?—Hunters and high-class harness horses and coach horses.

5639. What sires do you use?—There are various sires, there was a sire, "Prince of Peru," who, I am sorry to say, did a lot of harm in the district.

5640. Were they thoroughbreds?—Yes, with one or two exceptions.

5641. You have bred from half-breds?—Yes, and with very good results.

5642. Is the climate and district in your county suited for breeding horses?—Very well suited; it is good limestone land.

5645. What is the general class of horses bred about that district?—I should say half hunter colts and half good harness colts; it is one of the districts that supply the London job masters principally.

5644. Have the farmers got good mares as a rule?—In parts of the County Limerick they have, in the County Clare they have not, in parts of the Counties Cork and Kerry they have not, and in the extreme west of the County Limerick they have not good mares, but round the Limerick district and towards Cork, in the Golden Vale district, they have very good mares.

5645. Taking them generally do they feed their young stock well?—They do not, and I think if any inducement could be offered to them to improve their young stock in the way of premiums for foals, yearlings and two-year-olds it would be a step in the right direction, they starve their horses, anything is good enough for a horse, because it is a dairy country principally.

5646. They give the cows the best of it?—Yes, and they put the horses where the cows won't do.

5647. Do they work their brood mares?—Yes,

nine-tenths do, except in the case of old screw mares, who are unable to work, broken-down hunters and broken-down steeplechase mares.

5648. Do they keep their foals when they have a good foal?—I am sorry to say they do not, they go away at such fares as Spancil Hill, Cahirmee, we see droves going away every year of three and four-year-old fillies.

5649. Have you any way to suggest for keeping them from going away?—The only way to suggest would be offering prizes for three, four and five-year-old mares, stinted to a horse or in foal, I believe if they retained them to five-year-old they would see the advantage of it and keep them altogether. There is a fortune lost annually in the fact that the best of our mares are sold at very small prices, I don't agree with the last witness that you can get £60 or £70 for mares. I believe there are excellent mares sold at £35 to go abroad, mares excellently suited to breed from, and mares three parts thoroughbred.

5650. Do they breed from two-year-old fillies at all?—Not much, the fillies are not well kept enough to encourage it at present.

5651. You would not encourage it?—I would like to encourage it, I think there is money lost that way.

5652. Are there good sires?—There are several good sires and several very bad ones, but I am happy to say the latter are being done away with rapidly.

5653. Do the farmers mate their mares well?—A good many of the more intelligent farmers do, and do not consider anything but the mating, but they would not be 25 per cent., the fee is the main consideration with breeders in the south of Ireland.

5654. Do you think there are a sufficient number of sires for the district?—In my immediate district there are, and good sires, but in Clare and Kerry, and West Cork there are not.

5655. Do you think the fee of the good sire is within the reach of the ordinary small farmer?—It is not, it is too high in most cases.

5656. Are the horses now as good as they used to be or are they deteriorating?—Do you mean if they produce as many good colts as they used to.

5657. Take the average class of horses?—The average class of horses of which you see the produce in fairs, the produce is worse, decidedly worse.

5658. Is there any reason you can give for that?—One reason is that some six or eight years ago, when there was a boom in the horse trade, people bred from anything and everything, and their sole object was to produce horses, latterly the price for the average harness horse, and cabber, and busser, and trammer, has gone down in price nearly fifty per cent.

5659. And with that class of horses the price of every ordinary horse has gone down?—Because the demand for those used to make them buy sometimes even a superior class of horses to put in their places when they could not get what they wanted exactly, and I believe the price of that style of horse will go down still lower.

5660. Do you think it is caused more by breeding from bad mares than from using bad sires?—I believe it is.

5661. Are there many half-bred sires in that district?—There were a great many until the Royal Dublin Society began to register horses, and then they were done away with; the Dublin Society hall-marked certain horses by registering them, and a good many of the half-bred horses which did good in the country have been done away with. I myself have been the means of doing away with some fifty or sixty in the South of Ireland, and some very useful horses.

5662. Did they get good stock?—Good saleable colts, saleable harness and hunter colts.

5663. And yet they have done away with them?—Yes, because they were not patronised, it does not pay a man to keep a stallion and get a dozen or twenty mares for him; there has not been half as much breeding in the South of Ireland for the last five years as before, farmers have given it up.

5664. If these half-bred sires got good stock why were they not patronised?—Many farmers gave up breeding.

5665. Do you approve of the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme?—Not in its entirety, I believe they have taken a step in the right direction in registration, I don't approve of subsidising stallions, because it has been grossly abused, and is bound to be abused.

5666. How do you mean?—For instance when the Society paid half a registered stallion's fee I have known cases were that was the only money paid to the stallion owner, and they were glad to get it. I have known horses bought for £40 and £50 in days gone by to get £200 premium.

5667. In those days the horses were not registered?—Yes, they were, they were shown here and awarded premiums, I call it registration.

5668. What scheme would you suggest?—I would suggest that if practicable every stallion of every sort be registered, and, if possible, every brood mare, every stallion of every breed in Ireland be registered, and also every brood mare.

5669. You would insist on their being sound, would you?—Decidedly, I believe that has been one of the curses of horse-breeding in this country, breeding from unsound stock, not so much stallions as mares, because if it gets abroad that a stallion is unsound people will shun him unless he gets notoriously good stock.

5670. You think there are a number of unsound mares in your district?—I know it, I live on it.

5671. The young stock are more unsound or are they getting sound?—I think they are improving for the last three or four years slightly.

5672. Are there any other sires in your district besides half-bred and thoroughbred?—There are a few nondescripts, and there used to be a good many more.

5673. We will call them half-breds, but are there any other pure-bred like Suffolk Punches or Hackneys?—There are some Hackney sires, there is a Hackney sire in Clare, and there is a Hackney sire at Galtee Castle. I don't know whether it is in Limerick, Cork, Tipperary, it is near the whole three.

5674. What is his name?—I cannot tell you, he belongs to Mr. Abel Buckley. There was a Hackney sire called King of the Forest that stood at Kilmallock for two years, he was leased by the late Mr. Harris, I think, and there are some Hackney horses in Galway.

5675. Have you seen the stock of King of the Forest?—Yes, I saw the foals who were very pretty; I thought the yearlings were not as nice as they should be, and I did not like the two-year-olds.

5676. They deteriorated each year?—I thought they did. I have seen some very nice Hackneys, but they have been exceptions, one in a hundred, and I don't believe in the half-bred stallion.

5677. You don't believe in the cross between the Hackney and the ordinary Irish blood mare?—I do not.

5678. You advise the farmers to breed harness and hunter horses, what sire would you use?—They are the only horses that will pay, and I recommend them to get big-boned thoroughbred sires; if they cannot get them, I would not object to a half-bred sire; I mean a horse with three-quarters English thoroughbred blood in him.

5679. You are in favour of registering mares as well as sires?—I should like to insist on it if possible.

5680. And would you register again the progeny of those mares?—Yes, like individuals are registered, register the birth of every foal and keep a record of it, and have that record available on the payment of a small fee, 6*d.* or 1*s.*, by anybody who wanted it.

5681. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Don't you think that mode of registering would cost a great deal of money?—I think it would be a very simple matter by insisting on the owners of stallions registering the service of every mare who comes to them, there is no need of

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bothering with mares who are not served, but when every mare is served the stallion owner should be compelled to register that service and transmit a copy to some competent authority, it might be done through the Royal Dublin Society or through the local societies, the Petty Sessions Clerk or the police.

5682. CHAIRMAN.—You would not have anything to do with the mares that were not registered?—I should register every mare to begin with, that is served by any sire, and then you can depend on a process of selection, you can get at the owner of the mare if you want to advise him; I think that could be done by circular and pamphlets, or sending down an Inspector who would talk to the man, see what his mare was like, and advise him. I believe a great deal could be done in that way, I believe it is through ignorance a great many of the farmers breed at haphazard.

5683. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You would make it obligatory on the owner of the horse to see that every mare that came to his horse was registered?—Yes, if possible I would, it is one of the means I suggest of doing it, and I believe it is the only means, and it would be to his interest to do it and to show the best possible record.

5684. You said that you thought the price of second class horses had gone down, do you think that is from the inferiority of the animal or is it through want of demand?—It is from want of demand, owing in a great measure to the importation of American horses; the decline in the harness horse trade and in the cab trade, owing, perhaps, to the introduction of bicycles; cab horses have gone down very much, cab horses don't fetch anything like what they did. Out of this country there was an enormous number of cab horses taken every year to London and elsewhere, and an enormous number of tram horses, but now that they are adopting electric traction these horses don't pay to produce.

5685. You would be sorry to see any other class of stallion introduced into your country than either a thoroughbred or a half-bred thoroughbred?—I should.

5686. Except for agricultural purposes?—I should be very sorry, I think they spoil the breed of horses, you get soft horses if you use Shires or Clydesdales, you get horses with bad feet and soft gummy legs, they don't stand in their wind. If you breed from Hackneys you get horses with no middle piece, mean quarters, good front action and no hind action, with ugly heads and ewe necks as a rule, I allude to the half-bred Hackney. I believe if you breed Hackneys you should breed them as pure bred.

5686A. That is an expensive amusement rather?—An expensive amusement I look on it, and you may breed one or two in a lifetime that are wonderful horses; and you breed a hundred that don't pay.

5687. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Are you speaking of the district you reside in in Limerick or the general breeding of Ireland, in your professional capacity you probably know a great deal of the country?—I am speaking of Munster entirely, the part I know intimately, I have been pretty well all over Ireland. I know the districts I have spoken of very well indeed, and I know the mares they have got there and the sires they have got there, and a good many of those sires I have inspected for our Dublin Society and a good many for their owners. I have seen them, all of them, and I have looked at the class of mares there, and I believe if we could manage to retain our fillies, three and four year old fillies, that leave the country every year, we don't want to import any fresh material, except an odd stallion or two, and I should be very sorry to go to England for our mares and get the soft strain we all object to.

5688. Speaking of the registration of sires, what would you require a sire to fulfil before you registered him?—I should like him to be, if possible, thoroughbred, I should like him to be, if possible, fully 16 hands high, to be sound above all things, and to have good action, and if possible a bay or brown.

5689. In some of the evidence we have had there was a suggestion that the sires should be more or less approved before they were registered; that, of course, would take time, but should you consider it necessary to see what their stock should be like?—That cannot be done without trying them first, and somebody has got to do that, but I should go a good deal by the horse's blood. If a horse was able to win a three mile steeplechase under heavy weight, I would give that horse a good mark, and I know several horses like that; if you can get a horse with bone, substance, colour and action, that can win a three mile steeplechase, carrying 12 st., that stamp of horse you want, and they are to be had.

5690. With regard to the crossing of the Hackney, you object to the actual cross itself, and you said that the foals were shapely and good looking, the yearlings you did not care so much about, and when they were two-year-old, you did not like them at all, how do you account for that, and what do you actually mean by it, that they do not improve as they grow?—They do not improve as they grow older: I investigated the case of this horse Shales particularly, as he has got a lot of colts round Ennis; he is a good looking Hackney himself with size and a good mover; he has got a lot of colts. I have seen them from time to time. I went to see them again since I got the summons from this Commission; if you pull them out of the stable you cannot hold them for a mile, and you have got to kick them after three or four miles. I have never tried a thoroughbred Hackney. I saw some very pretty foals by him at Miltownmalbay out of well-bred mares, I saw some yearlings by him, and did not like them at all, the highest price I have been able to trace for his produce has been £22 for a three-year-old, that horse is now four or five, and I think you could buy him very cheap.

5691. Were those Hackneys belonging to the Congested Districts Board?—No, private enterprise.

5692. Have you seen any of the stock got by the better class Hackneys, those of the Congested Districts Board?—I saw fifteen or twenty put up for auction in Limerick the other day, and as foals they sold for £3 to £5, and as yearlings from £4 to £6.

5693. What part of the country did they come from?—From Kerry district.

5694. That is not supposed to be a very good district for breeding horses?—I have seen some that came from the west, the congested districts in Mayo and Galway; I have seen some of these brought; there are some men who regularly bring them to Limerick, and they say they don't look badly as foals, but they don't improve as they grow older. They appear to do better for their first year than they ever do afterwards and look better, they appear a bit hardier to rear, easily reared on poor land, the farmers don't handfeed them for their first winter and the smaller foals appear to do better, but as two and three-year-olds they do not look well.

5695. There was another question with regard to the small farmer who breeds an odd horse. You spoke of the ignorance of the farmers with regard to breeding; that you thought they erred through ignorance as to the class of horse and their method of breeding?—They do. I believe it is the principal factor in the production of the weeds and screws we see.

5696. Do you think their opinion is worth taking on the subject of the breeding of the country, the small farmers?—I should much rather take the opinion of the dealers who come over and buy our horses, and I should cater for the thing we have a market for.

5697. I was going to ask you that question too, but would you take the opinion of these men who breed in this sort of way; we are told they go to the cheapest horse, and very often go for a glass of whiskey. Do you think the opinion of these men who do that is

worth anything?—It is not worth anything. You must protect that man from himself.

5698. Whose opinion would you take?—I should place the greatest reliance on the dealers who buy for Messrs. East and Wimbush, and Mr. Withers, men who used to go to Yorkshire for their horses, and had to leave it and come to Ireland.

5699. Why did they leave it?—Because the blood was too soft, and they had to leave it They all state that. I have spoken to most of them, and read letters written by them. They want a horse with as much thoroughbred blood as they can get.

5700. How do you account for the Yorkshire blood getting soft?—Owing to using Cleveland and Hackney and other sires.

5701. Yorkshire and Lincolnshire were formerly as celebrated for their hunter stock and staying powers as this country is?—Yes, and they take them from here now. I know Yorkshire dealers who take 100 horses a year, several of them come over here and buy them. There was one man, who died a couple of years ago, and he never has taken less than 100 hunting colts a year out of the district round the Golden Vale, and from Spancil Hill and Cahirmee, and other fairs.

5702. Then it is your idea that if foreign blood is introduced in the breeding of these Cleveland Bays, Hackneys, and Clydesdales it will bring this country into the same condition as Yorkshire and Lincoln?—I believe so. If we can retain the best we have got we can do far more good than by importing anything. If we can induce the farmers to keep their mares, and I think that can be done.

5703. There is a question that comes in with regard to Ireland, in dealing with the whole country, it is so different, the central portion calculated to breed a high-class hunter or harness horse, all the capabilities, it has got blood and stock; then there is the congested districts, all the fringes, and there is the north where they cannot produce that animal, and apparently neither the soil nor the animal they have there at the present moment is suitable for the production of the hunter Can you suggest any means of helping the breeding in those parts?—I don't believe, to begin with, they should breed horses at all. They have not the land to rear them on; most of those are small farmers; they have to sell their horse as a year old, no matter what he fetches, because they have no room to keep him, and they want what he makes. I believe it would pay them better to breed cattle; they should not breed horses at all. I believe it is a dangerous experiment bringing horses into Ireland because the farmers in my district go to fairs near the congested districts, and buy their stores there, and bring them into the country, and once you get the blood into Ireland, it is not such a big place, they will go through it, and it will take years to eradicate, and will give the horses a bad name. I believe the place is too small for experiments.

5704. You look upon it as possibly a dangerous and expensive experiment?—I do, and I have seen the ill-effects of it, going through the small country fairs now and seeing the things they bring in, nondescripts and useless for anything; some years ago they might have done as vanners or cab horses, but there is absolutely no demand for them now, you cannot sell them, they are hawked to a dozen fairs and the owners are not asked the price of them.

5705. Not only have they lost their staying powers but they have lost their make and shape?—They have lost their make and shape as well. The few cart horses we had in our country have done incalculable harm.

5706. Have you seen any powerful draught horses bred anywhere in Ireland from the Shires and Clydesdales?—I have.

5707. Really big powerful horses?—I have, and there is no market for them in Ireland; I have known that their owners could not sell them in Ireland, and sent them over to Glasgow and sold them well, but they have been principally Scotch farmers.

5708. And you think they could grow that class of horse if it was required?—They could, decidedly, but I consider it is a dangerous experiment letting them into the country, I have seen crosses with a good deal of Clydesdale and Shire blood in them, soft brutes, they have gummy legs and bad flat feet, and they are a delicate-constituted horse and want staying power; I have ridden horses to hounds with that cross in them and they were not worth riding, I would rather ride a thoroughbred screw not within three stone of my weight.

5709. You spoke of the high class harness horse that Messrs. Wimbush and East and those big London dealers require, and that they formerly got of the old Yorkshire and Lancashire stock, how is that horse got and what class of horse is that, what do they call a high-class carriage horse, those dealers?—Well, he is an animal that would make almost as good a hunter as a harness horse, I have known dealers to take 100 away at a time from one man in my district.

5710. At what ages do they buy?—Three and four year old.

5711. What prices do they give?—As high as £70 a piece, sometimes higher, I have seen them give £100. Those colts are bought at this time of the year, two-year-old, rising three, and as three-year-olds, and held until they are coming four, and bought at pretty low prices, held over for a year by men who make it their business to cater for these harness horse dealers, and they are taken away, 50 or 60 or 100 at a time by these men, and the lowest price as a rule that these men pay is £50, and they pay as high as £100.

5712. How are those horses as a rule bred?—From the good old stamp of hunter mare and the thoroughbred horse as a rule.

5713. Where are they chiefly bred?—Round Kilmallock, near Limerick, Tipperary, and that district and in north Cork, a good many of them, I know several farmers who buy them with the object of selling them again to the London jobmasters and make a pretty good thing of it too.

5714. But they are all bred on the lines of the thoroughbred hunter stock with the Irish mare that is in the country?—Precisely, it, as a rule, is a horse three parts thoroughbred; they are bred on the same lines as the hunter, and the jobmasters say they are the best horses, they can get more work out of them and they last longer.

5715. Have you any idea of what becomes of the very inferior class of horse that one sees in the fairs, that one cannot understand to what it can possibly be put?—I often wonder where they go to, they pull possibly costercarts and the poorer class of tradesmen's vans, and the farmers take them home themselves and use them to breed from, simply because they cannot sell them, and they have a wonderful trust in Providence, they say they may get something out of them eventually.

5716. Even if they do sell, I suppose it is a very unremunerative price?—It is a price that a calf would have made as a yearling, they had much better have cut their throats the day they were dropped, many of them, for they feed them for nothing, they get a little work out of them perhaps in the spring, and hawk them to a dozen fairs before they are asked where they are going with them.

5717. Can you suggest any way, because that is the curse of the country, any way in which that could be neutralised?—Stamping out would be the best thing to begin with.

5718. How would you stamp them out?—It is very hard to suggest a remedy, the only thing is to look to the future, they will gradually die out, but it would be a blessing if half the brood mares in the country were shot.

5719. I presume you consider it is very necessary to

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improve the mare before you can improve the breed. How would you propose to improve the mare, do you think you would improve her by putting a foreign horse on to her or a thoroughbred horse?—I don't think there is any necessity to look to other countries to improve our breed, if we could retain the fillies that I see leaving the country every day, and destroy the worthless mares that they breed from now, because they cannot get any one to buy them at any price.

5720. Do you think if you could do away with the inferior thoroughbred without any bone or shape or make about them, if you did away with those and could introduce into the country a really high class thoroughbred horse with plenty of bone and movement and power about him that he would be a better horse than any of the Shires or Clydesdales or Hackneys and those horses, and that you could build up the breed again better than with any other class of horse?—Decidedly, I would not let a Clydesdale, Shire, or Hackney into the country to be used generally through the country if I could stop them. I believe if we could keep our own fillies, without external aid the question of the sires would regulate itself, it pays no man to keep a bad sire, a weedy thoroughbred horse, whatever his record, will get no mares.

5721. Don't you think there is a good deal of wrong impression amongst many farmers with regard to bone and substance, they will see an underbred big boned horse and they will think that he is a much more powerful and larger boned horse than a lighter well-bred one?—Decidedly, that is through the ignorance I spoke about before, and that wants to be corrected if you can, they want to be protected from themselves. They call those strong horses in my country, and if they have a weedy mare they cross her with those and get a nondescript wretch that is utterly worthless.

5722. In fact he does not put any power or substance into her, what he puts is bad stuff?—Bad stuff, soft constitution, bad legs, and bad feet, they get colts to throw out curbs and spavins, to spring their hocks and go wrong generally. And on the question of curb I think it is a mistake the Royal Dublin Society have not taken it up, it is not one of their hereditary diseases, and I don't know anything more hereditary.

5723. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you mean the curb itself or the formation of the hock?—The formation of hock and the tendency to curb.

5724. The horse may have a curb and a very good hock?—That is what I mean.

5725. You mean a curby hock—that a horse with curby hock ought to come under the list of hereditary diseases?—Decidedly.

5726. When you are talking of horses being bred from those animals that produce curbs and spavins and unsound feet I think you are speaking generally with regard to Shires and Clydesdales?—I think any horse or mare for stud purposes should be rejected for curbs and unsound feet.

5727. But when you say that those coarse-blooded horses produce that, were you referring to Hackneys or not?—I think Hackneys give a decided tendency to curb—particularly the half-bred Hackney—and have weak hocks, all of them.

5728. From what experience are you speaking with regard to that horse Shales?—Several I have seen in the country—several colts got by him and some got by the other Hackney I have spoken about; and the general formation of the Hackney hock is what we call a curby hock—a weak hock.

5729. Was that other Hackney you spoke of a pure Hackney?—Yes; he was in the Hackney stud book.

5730. You don't remember his name?—King of the Forest.

5731. You would not call Shales a good specimen of a Hackney?—I would call him a very useful Hackney.

5732. Practically from those two your chief experience is derived?—Yes, and from the general formation of the half-bred Hackney's hock, which is a weak hock, and liable to curb on the slightest strain; but I would reject thoroughbred horses with a curb as well—all horses with curbs.

5733. You said, I think, that you had done away with a good many sound half-bred horses that got good stock?—Yes.

5734. You think that is a pity?—I do.

5735. And you think that some of these horses ought to be registered?—I think they should be registered, but I would have them on a separate register and as a distinct thing from the thoroughbred horse.

5736. In your register you would trace as far as possible the breeding of each horse?—As far as possible.

5737. How would you propose to carry it out; it was suggested yesterday through the Petty Sessions Clerk?—It would be a very good way.

5738. And you think that could be carried out, and it would be worth the expense?—I think it could be done very cheaply through the stallion owner and the Petty Sessions Clerk.

5739. You cannot suggest any better way?—No, I cannot.

5740. If that registration was carried out would not the breeder be perfectly capable of taking care of himself, and seeing that he did not breed from any blood he objected to?—No; you want to protect the majority of breeders in Ireland from themselves.

5741. But if the register was carried out everybody who bought a horse could find out how it was bred?—That would be the object of registration.

5742. Then if anybody objected to any particular blood he could avoid it?—That would be the object in registering; and the Irish hunters are now getting a bad name, and a good many horses are sold as Irish hunters that were never bred at all in the country. I have known horses brought from England to Ireland, and taken back again to England as Irish hunters.

5743. Is it a fact that horses come over from England to the Horse Show?—Yes.

5744. You have seen them at Holyhead, perhaps?—I am not at liberty to give my source of information, but I know it. I have known horses entered for the Dublin Show with their pedigrees, and bought subsequently to the entry—say, entered as a bay horse, six years old, got by Victor or something else, and the man then has gone and bought the horse after he made his entry—a horse he had never seen or heard of before. I have known several instances. He entered the horse before he knew whether he would have him or not, got him in on the single fee, and then went to look for the horse.

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Mr. WILLIAM THOMAS TRENCH, D.L., Lorrha, examined.

5745. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Co. Tipperary?—Yes.

5746. Near Roscrea?—Near Parsonstown.

5747. You take a considerable interest in horse-breeding in your district?—Yes.

5748. Do you breed any horses yourself?—Yes, I do, thoroughbreds and half-breds.

5749. Are there many horses bred round you?—Yes, it is a large horse-breeding district, North Tipperary.

5750. What class of mares have the farmers?—Well, I suppose they are what you would call hunter brood mares, many of them, they are half-breds, but I should think there is every breed almost represented there.

5751. Mongrels in fact?—Yes, there is a great deal

of thoroughbred blood through the country, and that thoroughbred blood is crossed with the blood of what we call half-bred stallions and with Clydesdales and with Suffolk Punches and Shire horses, I fancy we don't distinguish much between them. I am not aware of there being any Hackney stallion in our part of the country.

5752. Do they work the mares on their farms or let them run out?—They are all worked, the farmers all work their mares.

5753. And the stallions in your district, what are they?—The stallions, I think, are chiefly thoroughbreds in North Tipperary, but there are others besides, half-bred and pure-bred carthorses.

5754. And are they suitable to the mares in the district, do you think?—No, I don't think they are.

5755. What class have you?—I keep a thoroughbred stallion myself.

5756. Do you approve of half-breds?—Yes, I think the half-bred would be a decided improvement, if we had good half-breds.

5757. Have you any suggestions to make as to how much blood you would want or any qualification in the horse?—I think it ought to be selected by appearance first of all, but I don't think appearance would be sufficient unless they were tested in some way or other, either in the hunting field, or in point to point races, or in public between the flags. Supposing a horse had got good stock I should be quite satisfied with that. If a horse got good stock I think it would be the very best test whatever his appearance was.

5758. Have you ever considered the question of introducing the Hackney?—Not to any very great extent, but I believe it is necessary to have some cross, if you go on using nothing but the thoroughbred you will end in weeds; you must have a cross of some sort, what that cross should be is another thing, at present the cross is Clydesdale and to a certain extent the half-bred, and I think if you could improve the half-bred you would do away with the necessity for any other cross, you would do away with the Clydesdale and you would do away with the Shire horse.

5759. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme working in your district?—Yes.

5760. Is it doing good do you think?—I don't think it is.

5761. Do farmers avail themselves of it?—To a very limited extent.

5762. Do you think the young stock has improved in the district since the scheme was started?—I cannot see any improvement, I should say it had not.

5763. Would you have any suggestion to make for a change in the scheme?—I should give prizes to the horse that got the best stock.

5764. Thoroughbred or half-bred?—Whatever it was.

5765. Would you be in favour like some of the other witnesses of registering mares?—Yes, I think I should, I think it would give a good deal of trouble, but if it could be carried out I think it would be very desirable. I think it would put down bogus pedigrees to a great extent, which is very desirable.

5766. You mean you could say "Here is a horse bred in such and such a way," and point to the registration?—Yes, I think that would be very useful.

5767. Do you think the horses round your district now are as good as they were some time ago?—Yes, I should say quite as good.

5768. Not inferior?—No, I could not say that they are inferior to what they were, a large proportion of them are very bad, but that must always be the result of cross breeding.

5769. You mean breeding from a mare of one type and a sire of another?—Yes, two animals unlike one another, and neither of them the type you wish to produce.

5770. Do the farmers feed their stock and treat them well?—No, I don't think they do as well as they ought to.

5771. Do they breed from two-year-old fillies?—Not at all.

5772. Do you breed from them yourself?—I have once or twice.

5773. Are you in favour of it?—No, I think it stunts the filly, and you are breeding from an untried animal which I think is objectionable. I would sooner breed from an old mare with broken knees than from an untried animal, if I knew the old mare was a good one.

5774. Do you think the farmers take any trouble about mating their mares, or are they guided more by the fee?—Some of them are very particular about the horse, but I don't think, as a rule, in our part of the country they have much judgment. I agree very much with what Mr. Winter said that I think they require to be taught, a great many of them.

5775. You say the sires in your district you don't consider suitable for the district?—No, I think there are very few good sires in the district.

5776. Have you any suggestions to make for breeding improved stock in your district?—I mentioned in the answers to the queries sent to me what I would suggest.

5777. Will you read it out please?—Perhaps I might read the conclusions. I venture to suggest the following:—First, that local shows should be held in the spring where prizes would be awarded to the best yearlings, the property of farmers. At these shows let the stock of each stallion be exhibited separately, so as to give breeders an opportunity of judging of the characteristics of each horse by his produce. Secondly, award substantial prizes to the sires of the best groups of yearlings, say twelve in each group. These shows would be invaluable to breeders for purposes of comparison. They would not be favoured by dealers, who would prefer that the best stock should be kept in the back ground until purchased by them. As a result of these shows I would anticipate that some of the best colts would be kept entire, and thus the pick of the half-breds would be used to perpetuate their species. I think the shows being held in the spring would encourage the farmers to keep their stock well during the first winter, the most important period of a horse's life. I would abolish the registration of sires, and as far as possible let each horse stand on his own merits as judged by his stock, of course the competition of sires at the Dublin Show would still continue. 3rd, Roaring: in order to discourage the use of roaring sires I would have a register kept by the Dublin Society of all sound winded horses (not being geldings or mares) running in public, this list possibly might not be perfect, but it might easily be nearly complete, if the Society employed a veterinary surgeon at a yearly salary at each of the principal training grounds. These veterinary surgeons would report to the Society as to each horse's wind, a matter which is perfectly well known to every stable boy in the locality. This list would not be published, but any breeder would, on payment of a fee, be informed whether any particular horse was on the list during his racing career. In this way breeding from sound winded horses would be encouraged, and in course of time we should cease to breed our half-bred stock from horses of roaring blood. The unsatisfactory working of the present system of veterinary surgeon's examination of stallions I need hardly remark upon, the plan I have suggested would, I hope, replace it with something more reliable. In conclusion I think we ought to try to breed our hunters pure. If we could begin by breeding from the best looking hunting colts we should be making a move in the desired direction. The Americans have established a breed of half-breds which can trot as fast as our Grand National thoroughbreds can gallop, and there is no doubt we can breed our hunters to any type and standard we please. The obstacle at present is that a hunter gelding is generally preferred to a hunter stallion. I have already suggested how

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breeders might be induced to keep their colts entire. Had the difficulty not existed we should have had a distinct breed of hunters long ago. But though we might breed good-looking hunters in this way we could never expect to bring them to a high standard of excellence as regards performance unless they were tested as to speed, endurance; and weight-carrying powers. I entirely agree with Count Lehndorff that it is the test of the winning post which has made the English thoroughbred what he is, and our hunters must be tested similarly if they are to excel in like manner.

5778. In fact you would like to register mares and start a Registered Hunters Book?—Yes, and they would have to be tested.

5779. In your district does the land grow good bone or is it inclined not to?—I think the horses in my district are inclined to be light in bone; they are very hardy, the land is limestone and it is light soil, the horses have wonderful endurance, you never get a soft horse from our part of the country.

5780. What sire would you recommend in your district?—I recommend a good thoroughbred sire and a half-bred sire with a certain amount of thoroughbred blood in him.

5781. Mr. WRENCH.—How do you account for the endurance of the horses in your district, do you think soil or climate has anything to do with it?—I think that has a good deal to say to it, and also there is a good deal of thoroughbred blood running through the mares.

5782. And then you say that all these stallions should be tested?—Might I add I think it is also that the mares are put to extremely hard work, and the farmer won't keep a mare if she is not hardy and thrifty and able to do a long day's work and a severe one.

5783. Therefore you think it is an advantage breeding from mares that undergo a great deal of hard work and hardship?—Yes.

5784. And would not the hunting field be the best practical test of these horses that you suggest should be bred?—I think it would, but I think point to point races might do something besides, it is very difficult to tell of the private merits in the hunting field, it depends very much on the rider.

5785. But still it would be some test if he did a long run?—Yes.

5786. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You would not look on the test of the hunting field, as equal to the test of the racecourse?—By no means, but I think the test of the racecourse is very often omitted in the thoroughbred stallions we use, they are simply bought by their pedigrees, horses utterly useless on the turf, and that perhaps never have been tried, are used as hunter stallions.

5787. But then, although they may not have been tried, their sires and dams were probably tried?—A great many of the mares bred from have never been tried, I think half the mares in the Stud Book have never been tried, never been publicly tried, nobody knows anything about their performance.

5788. Mr. WRENCH.—Would you be satisfied to breed from a horse that had not proved a success on the racecourse himself, provided he was bred from parents both of whom had been very successful on the racecourse?—I would sooner have a horse that was a tried performer himself.

5789. Do you think it is very hard to buy the right kind of thoroughbred stallion at present?—I can hardly say that, I should say it was not very hard.

5790. You think you could buy a good class of thoroughbred stallion now at a reasonable price?—It is a matter of what you would call a reasonable price, under £500.

5791. Do you think you would have to give up to that sum?—I would put that as an outside sum to give for a hunter stallion, from £150 to £350, perhaps.

5792. But as a rule are not the most of the thoroughbred stallions that come over to Ireland bought for very much less?—I believe for very much less.

5793. There are very few of that class of horses practically in the country?—Very few.

5794. Do you think it would be easy to find suitable hunter sires now?—No, I don't think it would, they exist as geldings.

5795. As sires they don't exist?—They don't exist. If you could have your pick of the colts of Ireland you would have a very fine class of hunter sires, or if you could turn the prize geldings of the Dublin Show into stallions you would have a very fine breed of hunters.

5796. But up to the present it has not been possible to get them?—No.

5797. And they would have to be bred. Failing such a hunter sire with mares that would be too fine and weedy for a thoroughbred horse, what stallion would you use?—I think the cart horses are certainly objectionable, I think the Hackneys are perhaps less so than the cart horse.

5798. Have you any personal experience of Hackneys?—One of the best hunters I ever rode was by a Hackney out of a Connemara pony, and I believe an inferior Hackney, but I don't think one exception proves anything. Mr. Webber stated yesterday he had ridden a Hackney, and could not get him over the first fence, all I can say is that this horse—and a good many people remember him in my part of the country—I never saw a run too long for him, he was not very fast, but it was not his fault if he was not in at the end of a long run, he could jump anything, but had very bad action.

5799. His high action did not suit his going?—No, he went close to the ground, but he had beautiful shoulders and never came down.

5800. If you could get a suitable Hackney for very weedy mares with some thoroughbred blood in them you would not object, I mean in poor parts where you cannot use a thoroughbred horse and cannot buy a hunter sire?—I have seen the Hackneys at the Hackney Show in London, but there are very few of them one would like to put to a mare. If one could get them like that they would do (*producing picture*), that is a fancy picture, there (*producing picture*) is the reality.

5801. He is not a very well bred Hackney?—He was a prize winner at the London Show this year.

5802. I think you said that in the Dublin Show you would give prizes to the young stock, no matter by what sire they were?—I think I said I would give prizes to the sire, no matter to what breed he belonged.

5803. I understood it was the stock?—No; my object is to encourage the sires that produced the best stock. I think that it is very doubtful whether it is very much use to give prizes to the best-looking stallions. Some little time ago I prepared a list, went through the prize list of the Royal Dublin Society's Show, and, assuming the pedigrees to be correct—which, perhaps, is rather a large presumption, but assuming them to be correct in the majority of instances—I found out that in the twenty years from 1868, when there was a regular list kept, until 1888, that the sires that had got the most of the winners had never been shown, with the exception of one, and he had been rejected; and that three sires, two of whom had never been shown and the third had been turned out of the ring, had got more prize winners than all the prize stallions put together. These three got 41 between them, and all the prize stallions in the Dublin Show for 20 years had only got 28. That (produced) is the list, and I think you will say the horses at the top of the list were deserving of a great deal more money than most of the others.

5804. Practically, you would let all the prizes be given according to the merit and not to appearances?—In the first instance, I think I should give a good-looking horse a prize, and then let him prove himself afterwards. I would give him a start for his looks,

for you have the valuable opinion of the judges as to his appearance, and that carries out Mr. Winter's plan of educating the farmer and instructing him.

5805. In the Dublin Show, in those classes where mares are shown with foal at foot to a thoroughbred sire, would you extend that to every sire registered?—I don't think you can judge a foal at all; there is no use in that class.

5806. Would you admit mares in foal by half-bred sires?—I would prefer not giving an opinion; I don't feel certain about that, one way or the other.

5807. You heard registration suggested of mares, and also it has been suggested it should be carried out through the Petty Sessions Clerk; do you think that is a practical proposal?—Yes; I don't see any objection to it.

5808. And you think that any expense that was incurred by that would be well worth while?—I am inclined to think it would.

5809. Can you think of any better proposal than carrying out local registration?—No; I don't think there could be anything better. I think there should be a register kept some way or other. I think the stallion owner ought to be obliged to register all the mares that come to his horse so far as he knows them, but I think some of the stallion owners don't know what mares their horses cover.

5810. But still you think registration might be carried out, and it is quite a practical proposal through the Petty Sessions Clerk?—I think so, or the Constabulary: the Constabulary now-a-days have very little to do, I am glad to say. I just wish to say with regard to roaring sires that there are several of the crack Irish stallions at the present moment that are supposed to be roarers. I won't mention names because I don't know whether I might not be laying myself open to an action for libel or not, but I think it is very objectionable that nobody should be able to say for certain whether the horses in that list are sound or not—that is, whether we are breeding from roaring stallions or not. I have a list here (produced); I suppose it will be considered confidential.

5811. CHAIRMAN.—Suppose a sire comes off the turf, he might be perfectly sound off the turf, but he might turn roarer again?—I should ask no questions if he had run in public up to three or four-year old and come sound off the turf; I don't think you can go any further than that.

5812. Lord RATHDONNELL.—That is, if he had a well-shaped neck?—I don't know whether it would be practicable to go into that question, I should not like to go into that question, but I should not like to see a horse with a long neck like a giraffe—he would be liable to be a roarer; but if he went through training up to four-year old, I think he would be very unlikely to breed a roaring stock.

5813. CHAIRMAN.—You mean if a horse comes sound off the turf, you would ask no more questions?—Not two years old, but at three or four years.

5814. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you said that you were in favour of registration, rather than making a stud-book for hunters?—No, I did not intend to say that; I think registration and the making of a stud-book, there is not a very great distinction between them.

5815. I just wanted to know what was your opinion?—I did not intend to distinguish between them.

5816. You have no preference for one above the other?—I think registration would produce a stud-book.

5817. But a stud-book has to be closed sometime or other?—No, you start by selection, in the first instance.

5818. How do you admit afterwards?—Of course in Weatherby's Stud-book you must trace back to a sire and dam in the stud-book.

5819. That is because it is closed, but if you make a stud-book, you must close it, I fancy?—I have not looked so far ahead as that.

5820. That is why I wanted to know if you had any preference for registration over a stud-book?—I should close it except to thoroughbred blood afterwards.

5821. I notice this is the rule in the English Hunter Improvement Society:—"The mare is eligible for entry which has been awarded a prize, been reserved or highly commended in hunter classes at any show in the United Kingdom." I wanted to know whether you would be inclined to admit untried animals?—I should try and keep them out as much as I could; I think the system on which the Hunter Improvement Society was started was necessary, but I don't think it was intended to be perpetual.

5822. You also said, with regard to the registration of stallions, that you would like to abolish the registration of sires?—The present registration of sires, I mean, under the Royal Dublin Society.

5823. What harm does it do?—I think horses are registered that are not in the least fitted for it; I think it has discredited the system, because farmers have seen horses registered which they don't consider, and I think rightly don't consider, to be worthy of registration.

5824. So you would not examine or inspect any horses in consequence of that?—I am not prepared to say that, but I think I would have them all examined at some local centre.

5825. You would not abolish the registration, but I understood you to say you did not see that there was any use in having them registered?—What I mean was under the present scheme, as it stands at present.

5826. There is a certain amount of safeguard, I suppose, in that?—I think there is very little, I have seen as bad horses as can be registered; I cannot understand on what principle they were allowed to pass—I have known horses unsound in the wind registered.

5827. Did they come off the turf sound?—I cannot tell you that, nobody knows that, we are all kept in ignorance at present about unsound winded horses, I want if I can to throw a little light on it.

5828. Mr. WRENCH.—You think it would be possible to throw light on it in the way you suggest by having a veterinary surgeon employed to watch horses on the training grounds?—Yes, I cannot see any practical difficulty, the matter of a horse's wind when he is on the turf is a matter of notoriety, which is published in the papers occasionally with regard to certain horses, and I often cut them out for my own information.

5829. Suppose we selelected Mr. Winter to spend his time on the training ground do you think he would be a very popular man there?—I think Mr. Winter would be very glad to undertake the business, I don't think it would be a question of popularity at all, if you go to Newmarket you can generally find out about a horse's wind.

5830. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—But I think you often hear that they are roarers when they are not so?—I saw it stated the other day that Persimmon was a roarer and that was contradicted next week; I know if anybody goes out and listens on the training ground he will learn a great deal about horse's wind, or if you listen when horses come back to the paddock. I have heard horses roaring in the paddock, and I have seen them advertised with a veterinary surgeon's certificate afterwards as perfectly sound. I could give you some curious instances in my own experience although it is very limited indeed.

Nov. 27, 1896.

Mr. R. G. Carden.

Mr. R. G. CARDEN, D.L., Borrisoleigh, examined.

5831. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Tipperary and have had considerable experience in the breeding of horses I am sure?—Yes, I have been breeding horses for the last ten years, from 10 to 15 mares each year.

5832. Can you tell us what success you have had?—I have won a good many cups and prizes in England and Ireland for animals principally bred by myself and I sold them for high prices in some cases; in 1891 to 1894 I was runner up for the Pembroke Cup in the Dublin Society's Show, and this year I won it, and sold the winner at a good profit. I have acted as a judge of horses, hunters and harness and Hackneys as well in shows in England and Ireland.

5833. What class of mares have you bred from and what sires have you used?—I principally bred from half-bred mares and in a few cases from thoroughbreds, but the stallions I have used have been in most cases thoroughbred, but occasionally I have used half-bred stallions.

5834. What class of horses is there the most demand for in your district?—The district is capable I think of producing the best class of horses of the various breeds if the proper measures for their production are taken, but owing to the demand in the local fairs being mostly for hunters and harness horses I consider those breeds most profitable to produce.

5835. Are many horses bred in the district and of what class?—There are a great number of horses bred in the district, the people who chiefly breed the horses, irrespective of the monied classes, are the small agricultural tenants and working farmers who generally keep one or two brood mares with which they do their farm work and from which they breed a foal as a rule every year. The class of mare in most instances is a half-bred animal from 15.2 to 15.3 hands high, whose principal faults are straight of their shoulders, back of their knees, light of bone and what is commonly called goose-rumped.

5836. Is breeding from two-year-old fillies a common practice in your district?—Yes, more practised of late years; I think if a two-year-old shows sufficient bone and substance she may be covered with advantage at that age by a half-bred sire showing quality, or a very strong boned thoroughbred.

5837. Is there a sufficiency of stallions in your district; are they suitable for the neighbourhood?—The thoroughbreds in my district are fairly good, but in many instances light in bone and substance, and also very doubtful as to soundness. The half-bred stallions as a rule are bad; in most instances they are the result of the cross of a thoroughbred or half-bred sire on a mare whose pedigree can rarely be traced, and who has probably in some part of her pedigree a strain of cart horse blood.

5838. Have the mares deteriorated, and if so, from what cause?—Yes, I think they have most distinctly deteriorated; the mares one sees with the farmers have neither bone or substance, they had some years ago.

5839. Can you give any cause for that at all?—Yes, I consider that mostly due to the fact that too weedy thoroughbred sires have been used instead of half-bred sires of good breeding.

5840. What is your opinion of the so-called half-bred horse with regard to his suitability as a sire?—I consider that the correct type of half-bred sire that should be used in the country does not exist at present except in a very few cases, and consequently they would have to be bred.

5841. You don't approve of the present class of half-breds?—No; not as a rule.

5842. Have you any observations to make with regard to the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in your district?—Yes; the scheme has been practically a failure in Tipperary. The young mares shown in the recent shows, with one or two exceptions, have been quite useless for breeding purposes, and if mated with any registered horse I know could not possibly produce a hunter to carry more than ten or twelve stone. The number of mares shown at the shows have decreased within the last two years.

5843. Have you any experience of breeding from a Hackney sire?—I never bred from a Hackney sire myself, though if I could get one of good breeding quality and hunter shape I should unquestionably put some of my hunter mares to him in preference to many of the half-bred sires of doubtful pedigree in the country.

5844. Do you think it is a desirable thing to introduce Hackney blood into a hunter district?—In the exclusively hunter districts such as Meath I would not be in favour of introducing a Hackney sire, but in districts which produce harness horses as well as hunters, I think they could with advantage be used, as a complete system of registration of every breed of horses in Ireland would prevent any mixing of the breed.

5845. Do you think a Hackney is likely to get a hunter?—I should not advocate Hackneys for producing hunters, but I would not go so far as to say it would be utterly impossible for a good shaped one to do so.

5846. Do you think he would get a good harness horse suitable for London dealers?—From what I have seen of Hackneys I think they are very suitable, for mostly all the prize winners in the harness classes at the shows in England and Ireland are pure-bred Hackneys.

5847. Would they be suitable for getting army remounts?—I have no experience, but I should think it probable that the progeny of the Hackney would not be less suitable than the misfit of an animal bred from a thoroughbred for a hunter and failing to be one. I consider the cross of the Hackney on the weedy mares of the country would be better than the cross of the thoroughbred at present available.

5848. Have you any suggestion to make to encourage the farmers to keep their good mares to breed from?—I consider if State aid was given Government Stud Farms should be started in different parts of the country, and that those studs should be formed with a view of improving horse-breeding, whether with a view of producing hunters or harness horses as will be most suitable to each district. Mares should be bred from at these studs which could be sold at public auction to the farmers, or that the farmers could claim them at a fixed price, with a view to breeding from them, those mares should also be branded so as to prevent the farmers disposing of them, and they should be covered free by whatever stallion in the Government stud, whoever was in charge of the stud should consider most suitable, this combined with a very strict system of registration would, I think, in time, greatly improve the breed of mares in the country.

5849. You would not leave the mating of the sire to the farmer?—I certainly would not leave it to the farmer, my experience of the farmer is that he takes his mare to a stallion simply because he happens to be friendly with the owner, quite irrespective of the question of whether the sire is suitable to the mare or not.

5850. You think the Government ought in fact to supply at a low price the mares to the farmers who have not got good ones?—I think the farmer should be able to go to these studs and either buy a mare there or be able to claim her at a fixed price, for the purpose of breeding from her, and I might say also, that I think at those studs—of course there would naturally be colts as well as fillies produced there—a very good type of half-bred sire would probably be produced.

5851. You mentioned, I think, that the half-bred sire would have to be bred, that there are very few of them in the country at present?—Yes.

5852. You would prefer to breed them than form a register of mares and sires under the Royal Dublin Society?—I think it would be done quicker in this way than it would be to only use the stallions in the country.

5853. In fact the Government would breed the half-bred sires for the country?—Yes, I think the farmer should be able to claim them at two-year-old, I should have mentioned that I consider the mares could be sold to the farmers at two-year-old or the stallions either.

5854. At a regular fixed price?—Yes. Or else, by public auction.

5855. Are a larger portion of the mares in your district suitable for breeding hunters?—Well, of course, it is a hunter breeding district, a great number of good hunters are bred there, but I think the mares as a rule are a very bad type, not half as good as they were some years ago, and I think they are deteriorating, as a matter of fact, from year to year.

5856. Do you think they are suitable to be put to the thoroughbred horse in the district?—As a rule, no, unquestionably not, I should say nine-tenths would be much more suited to be put to the half-bred horse if such were available.

5857. And you don't at all agree with the present system of only registering thoroughbred sires?—No, I don't believe in the system of the Dublin Society, I have seen some of the horses, and I don't think they are very suitable.

5858. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You mentioned half-bred sires, what do you mean by half-bred sires?—Well, I think as I said, the half-bred sires in the country are very bad, the best description of the suitable half-bred sire would be the cross of the thoroughbred on the sire's side and two or three strains of the thoroughbred blood on the dam's side.

5859. Two or three?—More if possible, very much the type of the good weight-carrying hunter.

5860. CHAIRMAN.—You also stated, I think, that the mares in your district had deteriorated from the use of weedy thoroughbreds?—Yes.

5861. No other causes, can you suggest any other causes?—No; I think that is really the cause, some years ago, before, perhaps, I was old enough to form an opinion, I know that they used half-bred sires in the country, and then they rather changed their system and used the thoroughbred sires, and now they are rather inclined to go back again, they find they cannot sell their animals got by the existing thoroughbred sires in the country at the early age they wish to sell them.

5862. Do they find them more unsound?—Of course I should not like to say anything about anybody else's stallion.

5863. Mares?—Oh, I think the mares of the country are often unsound, because I consider the farmer as a rule keeps his mare to breed from simply because he is not able to sell her owing to unsoundness.

5864. If he owns a sound one he is not averse to sell it?—He will sell any sound one he has.

5865. Do you think that has anything to do with the deterioration of the mares of the country?—It probably has, unsoundness is very often the result of the cross of the thoroughbred horse.

5866. You consider that the produce of the thoroughbred sire is more likely to be unsound?—I am afraid so, I think the breed of thoroughbred horses as a rule is unsound, because everybody knows it is not a question of soundness in the fashionable sires that are used in England to produce thoroughbred horses, it is simply a question of whether they have won races.

5867. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—It would require a pretty sound one to win classic races all the same?—Oh, it does not follow with those short races.

5868. I say the classic races?—We know Ormonde was not sound.

5869. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You mentioned carriage horses; what do you mean by carriage horses?—Harness horses, I presume they are very much the same, I mean animals that would be suitable to drive.

5870. Do you mean the old fashioned carriage horses that had bone and size and action, or do you mean the smaller animals that are generally driven in Victorias and things of that kind?—When I talk of carriage horses I mean Hackneys, I consider the Hackney the acme of perfection as a carriage horse.

5871. What height?—They vary in height.

5872. What is the highest you know?—I have seen them up to 16 hands.

5873. Now if the people who buy these carriage horses, like Messrs. East and Wimbush, had declared against the use of the Hackney stallion to get their carriage horses, would you agree with them?—Well, of course it depends, different people buy different types of horses, if their particular type was the animal got by a thoroughbred, of course I should, but if other people were to buy animals entirely got by Hackneys it would be the other way with me.

5874. What other people?—Well, all the best harness horses in England that are shown at the shows are pure-bred Hackneys.

5875. You are talking of shows, I am talking of the utility class?—I mean animals that will make the highest price.

5876. At a show it would be pure-bred, I fancy?—It may be so or it may not be, I have seen half-bred Hackneys at shows, not eligible for the Hackney Stud Book, and they have been exceedingly fine harness horses.

5877. Do you know at all who buys that class?—No, I never bred any harness horses myself.

5878. You know a good deal of money is spent by the London dealers in Ireland?—I think as a rule a good high class harness horse will make more money than a high-class hunter.

5879. Supposing they said they wanted their horses to be by thoroughbred horses, that the thoroughbred horse is the horse they prefer to have used for their trade, would you be inclined to agree with them?—Well, I don't think an animal got by a thoroughbred horse would have sufficient action for harness.

5880. Even if the dealers themselves said so?—If they find people to buy them that is their look out, but personally speaking if I went to look for a high-class harness horse I should not buy him if I knew he was got by a thoroughbred, unless he had exceptionally good action, which as a rule they have not.

5881. I am referring more to the dealers who spend their money over here, Messrs. East and Wimbush, and those sort of people?—Yes, I know.

5882. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Did you hear it stated by one of the witnesses, I forget whether yesterday or to-day, that Messrs. East said that almost the whole of their best class of carriage horses were by thoroughbreds and bought in Ireland?—Yes, I believe one of the witnesses did say so.

5883. I think he read it out of a letter?—Yes, I was in the room at the time.

5884. You don't agree with Mr. East?—Well, I never sold a horse to Mr. East.

5885. That he knows his own business best?—Yes, I am sure he does.

5886. I think you said that all the prizes in the harness classes in all the shows in England and Ireland were taken by Hackneys?—As a rule, yes.

5887. Is that the case?—The ones I have seen and judged at have been. There was a very noted horse, driven a good deal at shows last season, and I judged him twice in England, a horse called Norbury Squire, he was a pure-bred Hackney, he is quite undefeatable, I believe he won at almost all the shows he was shown at.

5888. Were they open classes or confined to Hackneys?—I think they were open classes, I am almost sure.

5889. I think you mentioned your half-bred horse that you would like to breed from would be very

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nearly thoroughbred, the one you mentioned just now?—Yes.

5890. The horse you would really like to breed from for producing a hunter and the horse you think would be most useful in Ireland would be a strong horse that has a very large admixture of thoroughbred provided that he is sound?—That is in the hunter-breeding districts, not the harness horse districts.

5891. Lord RATHDONNELL.—When you say the harness horse districts, could you define the harness horse districts in Ireland?—Well, I think from my experience there is really only one hunter-breeding district exclusively, and that is the county Meath, I think all the rest of Ireland breed both hunters and harness horses.

5892. And Meath is the only one for hunters, exclusively I mean for hunters?—I think it would pay in the rest of Ireland to breed harness horses as well as hunters.

5893. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—You attribute the decrease in the value and the quality of the animals to the cross with the light thoroughbred?—Yes.

5894. Do you think that the introduction of half-bred horses like the Shires and Clydesdales, of which there are a good many in the country, have had anything to do with it?—Well, not in my experience, though I certainly would be very strongly against a Shire or Clydesdale.

5895. Do you go round many of the fairs in Ireland?—A certain number.

5896. Well, walking through those fairs, when you have looked carefully over the animals don't you think you can detect the crosses without any difficulty between what is a high class animal and not, that has been crossed with a half-bred, namely, the Shire or Hackney, at least I know very little about Hackneys, but what I call the agricultural horse?—Yes, I think one can detect them in this way, that as a rule the lightest and weediest animal to be seen in the fairs is probably, if you inquire into the pedigree, got by a thoroughbred horse.

5897. Don't you see a very large number of what I call three-cornered brutes, useless for anything, with great heads badly set on to their necks, bad shoulders, bad legs, bad rumps, in fact bad everywhere, flat sides?—Unquestionably you do.

5898. Can you not in a moment say that that class of horse has got into that state from the introduction of other blood, other than the thoroughbred?—Yes, not perhaps directly, but I should probably imagine if I saw an animal of that description that his sire or dam might have had a soft strain of Clydesdale, Shire, or Suffolk Punch blood.

5899. Yes, but if you go through the fairs and go with your eyes open you can see them by hundreds?—I quite admit that.

5900. And you can detect that that is not the thoroughbred that has done that?—I don't say it is, but I say it is the intermixture, not exactly of a direct cross of the cart horse bloods you name.

5901. I don't say the direct cross, not the first cross. I am only speaking of the introduction of the blood that has altered the shape of what was a nicely turned thoroughbred horse, and he has grown a most three-cornered useless animal?—I don't think there are as many strains of cart horse blood now of late years being used as there had been formerly.

5902. That I am not speaking of, but can you not detect the coarse blood and the coarse formation of the animal in the fairs now to a great extent?—You can.

5903. Undoubtedly there are animals that are weeds from thoroughbred sires, but they are a much more shapely animal, and though they are a lighter animal, they are an animal you possibly could do something with, they would make a light hack or light harness horse?—As a rule, if an animal is strong even if he has bad shapes, you will find men to buy him, whereas an animal may be of good shape but light, and nobody will buy him.

5904. What will he buy them for, and at what price?—Of course at a low price, but one class of animal is practically unsaleable.

5905. They will pull a cart on the seashore, or pull the manure out of a farmer's yard, but he will not get anything for the animal?—No, a poor price.

5906. And that is through the introduction of half-bred blood?—Of cart horse blood.

5907. There are certain breeds of cart horse you would call pure?—Yes, I suppose so, every animal of its own breed is pure if it is entered in the Stud Book of its breed.

5908. Would you advocate the introduction of any coarse blood into the country to increase the size of the animals?—No cart horse blood.

5909. You very seldom get this heavy size without getting a certain coarseness in the blood?—With reference to what are you talking about.

5910. You get a big heavy horse?—Stallion, do you mean.

5911. He has generally got some coarseness in his blood?—Yes.

5912. Would you advocate bringing any of that coarse blood into the small mare of Ireland to improve her, to get strength and size?—I would not try to get strength and size by bringing in cart horse blood into the country, I mean Shires, Clydesdales, or Suffolk Punches.

5913. Don't you think, or rather do you think, with the really good horse, clean thoroughbred stock with good bone, a powerful horse, you could build up the present breed of animals in the country?—If they were procurable I should say so, but I don't think they are procurable.

5914. That is the question, but if they were procurable, don't you think you could do it better with that than by introducing any other blood?—I should agree so in hunting districts if you wanted to breed a hunter.

5915. Or even harness horses?—Well, I differ from you there.

5916. Will you take the men who deal in harness horses, their opinion must be of a certain amount of value? But with regard to the harness horses, you say all the prizes at shows are taken by the Hackneys; say you have a class of four or five Hackneys, what do you give the prizes for for a Hackney—do you give it for his conformation or the extraordinary height of his action?—General conformation and action.

5917. Which do you think gets the greatest number of points in the judge's eye, action or shape?—Personally speaking, I have given about an equal number of points in my opinion, when I have been judging them.

5918. It is not necessary that the highest action gets the prize?—By no manner of means; in fact, I think Hackney men attach too much importance to high action.

5919. Is it a physical fact that any extra action beyond what is required to carry the animal safely and well must necessarily be a waste of power?—That is a very ticklesome point to give an opinion on; I would not like to say that as an absolute fact.

5920. Well, it can be proved?—As a law of nature.

5921. As a law of nature, a physical fact, and it is a very essential one in a certain way with regard to the staying power of the animal, because given two animals of equal staying power, if one has got that extravagant high action it cannot last as long as the other, it is physically impossible?—I drove behind a Hackney by Danegelt, a pure bred Hackney in Lincolnshire; I drove that horse from twenty to twenty-five miles, and coming back you dare not touch that horse with a whip.

5922. There are Hackneys and Hackneys, that I don't deny for a moment, I wanted to find from you whether you did consider that the present breed in the country might be improved and built up by stick-

ing to the thoroughbred, if you could get the really high class blood with bone and strength, as well as by the introduction of any other blood?—I agree with you there, but I do not think it possible to procure it.

5923. But if it was procurable you would prefer it?—Certainly.

5924. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think hunter misfits generally make good harness horses, have they got enough action?—As a rule, the animal bred as a hunter and not coming up to the requirements is the result of his being too light for that purpose; such animals are sold for little money, and would certainly be unsuitable as good harness horses.

5925. Do you think the horses that you see in the fairs now are deficient in action or not, what class of action have they?—Their action, as a rule, is bad, and very often they are inclined to dish; taken on the whole, improvement in action I should say was required.

5926. And what do you think is the most saleable commodity in harness horses?—Action, certainly.

5927. Do you think that a thoroughbred horse is as likely to transmit action as a Hackney?—No, I should not say so.

5928. We have heard a great deal about this peculiar action that a Hackney has, you have seen a good many Hackneys, what do you think of Hackney action?—I think there are two distinct sorts of Hackney action:—The Yorkshire Hackney, which gets his forelegs well away from his shoulders, and springs well off his hocks; and the Norfolk, which perhaps though more showy of the two, is rather inclined to knee action.

5929. Which do you prefer?—I should certainly prefer the Yorkshire.

5930. You have seen a large number of the produce of Hackneys, have you not; do you find that their action is objectionable in any way?—I have seen a large number of the progeny of Hackneys, and when they have been of the Yorkshire type I have not considered their action too high; as a matter of fact, I have seen some Hackneys running on the field, and one would imagine their action was no higher than the ordinary horse one sees.

5931. You have watched them as young Hackneys?—Yes.

5932. What do you consider are the points that these weedy mares that you have described in your district are most deficient in?—As I said before, straight shoulder, light of bone in the leg, drooping rumps, and indifferent action.

5933. What horse do you think would be likely to correct that?—An exceptionally big, strong-boned thoroughbred, which, however, is hard to get; I consider a well bred, hunter-shaped Hackney as being the next most suitable.

5934. And if Government aid was given would you leave it to the farmers to say what class of stallion they required?—No; if, as I suggest, they were to get their brood mares at a reasonable price and free service of Government stallions, I should leave it to the head of each stud, who should be an authority on horse-breeding, to cross the mare with whatever stallion, in his opinion, would be most suitable to her.

5935. I think you said that in your district the farmers had used weedy thoroughbreds very largely, and that you attributed the deterioration in mares to that?—Yes.

5936. Are they at all falling into the opposite extreme now, and using coarse horses in order to get size?—Yes; farmers are certainly beginning to find, as a rule, the progeny of the thoroughbred horse is practically unsaleable before he reaches the age of three years, they are consequently inclined to go to half-bred stallions of perhaps doubtful pedigree.

5937. I think you said you would like these half-bred sires to have three crosses on the dam's side, do you think it is possible to buy these horses in the country now?—I think a certain number of good half-bred sires might be procurable, but not anything like the number that would be required in the country, and, in default of there being a sufficient supply, I should be quite content to use a hunter-shaped Hackney with a sufficient strain of thoroughbred blood in his pedigree.

5938. Would you use one for your own mares?—Yes; I would to one I considered too light to put to a thoroughbred.

5939. And you think it would be a distinct advantage if it was used in your district with carefully selected mares?—I should say so.

5940. Do you know at all how Yorkshire Hackneys are bred?—Yes; I believe the foundation of the breed was the cross of the thoroughbred horse with a Yorkshire roadster mare, which is of a distinctly staying type, for before railways were invented the Yorkshire farmer had to depend solely on his roadster for means of locomotion; I believe there are great records of their endurance and staying power.

5941. They were bred, as far as you could learn when in England, from a very staying race?—I believe so.

5942. A race that did very long distances?—I believe so.

5943. You have described the results of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in your district, and I think you said that the numbers of mares were decreasing at the shows?—Oh, yes; they are.

5944. To what do you attribute that?—I think they don't use the thoroughbred sires as much as they used to, and therefore they are not eligible to come under the scheme.

5945. And do the young brood mares that are brought and accepted under the scheme show an improvement?—With a very few exceptions, the young mares shown in the shows held this year were quite unsuitable to breed any useful horses.

5946. What class of farmers would you consider most in need of State assistance; we have had it advocated this morning that only the farmers who breed very high class hunters or harness horses should be assisted by the State, do you agree with that?—I think it is the poorer farmers should be assisted, say the farmer whose valuation is under £100, or perhaps £150; I think the better class are able to take care of themselves.

5947. And as a rule do these farmers want a horse that produces hardy stock that can be easily reared?—Oh, yes. It very often happens that they have no house accommodation to winter them in at all, they have to let them run out all the winter.

5948. Then I think you have heard it advocated that there should be a very complete system of registration, and I understand you agree with that?—Yes, a complete system of registration, and I should go as far as establishing a stud book of each breed.

5949. A stud book of hunter sires?—Of every breed bred in Ireland that has not already a stud book.

5950. And you would call it a breed of Irish hunters?—I would call the particular breed Irish hunters.

5951. And you have heard it stated here that some people view with alarm the introduction of Hackneys, that it may effect an injury to the Irish hunters, do you think there is any real cause for their alarm?—I think if the registration and stud book were started as I suggest, I don't see how the hunter breeding industry could be injured, and I think there is quite room enough in the country to breed the best harness horses as well as hunters.

5952. Is it difficult to find harness horses now?—If I wanted a pair of harness horses to-morrow I should not quite know where to go to look for them in this country.

5953. Do you know that the trade of these big jobmasters that has been referred to is really a very limited trade as compared with the whole trade of Ireland. We heard it stated yesterday that Messrs. East bought 250 horses a year?—I should consider it an extremely limited trade.

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5954. Of course there are others, but the trade in these big up-standing carriage horses is a limited trade?—I should say so.

5955. They cannot be produced in large numbers?—I should say not.

5956. Have you attended any sales of thoroughbred horses?—Yes, I attended the December sales at Newmarket several times.

5957. Do you think it is hard or easy to find thoroughbred stallions with plenty of bone?—I should say it is very hard, at the last December sales I only saw one horse sold in the whole week that I considered suitable either as regards shape or substance to produce a hunter.

5958. And practically now in breeding thoroughbreds conformation is not attended to at all?—I am afraid it is very little, it has simply become a question of their galloping powers and the likelihood of whether they will breed winners of races or not.

5959. Have you been yourself in the congested districts?—Yes, I have been in Cork, Kerry, and Donegal.

5960. On more than one occasion?—Yes, the last two years.

5961. Judging at the shows?—Judging at the shows.

5962. Have you had an opportunity of seeing the mares there and their produce?—Oh, yes, I considered them, the mares, extremely bad, and it was hardly possible to conceive how the good-looking foals running at their feet could be the progeny of such mares.

5963. And in addition to the foals did you see older produce?—Yes, yearlings, two-year-olds and three-year-olds, they all show a great improvement on the ordinary type of mare found in the district.

5964. Have you seen the produce of different stallions out of the same dam?—Yes. This year in Donegal at one of the shows a mare was shown, and she was not considered good enough to win a prize in her class, and there was also on view three animals her progeny, a four-year-old by a thoroughbred, a three-year-old by a Clydesdale, and yearling by the registered Hackney, neither the four-year-old or the three-year-old were worth anything, and the animal got by the Hackney stallion won first prize in its class and promised to turn out a useful animal.

5965. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Was that a foal?—The Hackney was a yearling.

5966. Mr. WRENCH.—When you were in the congested districts have you seen any of the former sires that used to be used there?—Yes, I have. One of the stallions I saw was curby, had spavin, side-bones, splints, and was a bad roarer.

5967. I believe he was a very popular animal in the district?—Yes, so his owner said at any rate.

5968. He said there were a great many mares sent to him?—He did.

5969. If you had to advise the Congested Districts Board, what stallions would you recommend them to send into those districts?—Unquestionably the Hackney, I have seen the result of the Welsh cob and Arab there too, and I think they are by no means as good-looking animals as the animals got by the Hackney.

5970. Do you think it would pay the farmers there to breed from sires like the Arab?—No, not like the Arab at all.

5971. You don't like any Arabs or Barbs for that district?—No.

5972. You think they must have a stronger horse?—Yes.

5973. But at the same time if good hunter sires exist you would try them?—I think I should.

5974. But failing these being procurable you consider the Hackney the best?—I am not at all sure that in any case I should not use the Hackney, for I think he would give them action, which they want very badly, he would give them action more than any half-bred hunter sire.

5975. You would use the Hackney in the first instance?—I think I should.

5976. Have you, as a matter of fact, seen any of these Hackneys that are sent to these districts by the Board?—Yes.

5977. What do you think of them?—I think they are very good of their kind.

5978. Have you ever, when you have been in these districts, talked to the people, as to what class of horse they themselves like?—Yes, at Bantry, in the present year, the country people told me they would have nothing except a Hackney; the Board sent a thoroughbred horse there this year and he was not nearly as much availed of as the Hackney had been.

5979. Was he a good class of thoroughbred?—He was, I thought him a good class of thoroughbred horse, he was good enough to win a good number of prizes in shows.

5980. I think he did a good deal of racing too?—Yes, he won several races.

5981. We have heard to-day that there is some peculiarity about the Hackney hocks, it only referred I believe to two particular Hackneys that happened to be in the South of Ireland, but from your experience of the hocks you have seen on the Hackneys sent to the west of Ireland do you think they are liable to curbs or badly formed?—I should go to the opposite extreme, most of the Hackneys I have seen in both Ireland and England have very good hocks.

5982. And do you know whether they are a sound horse or not?—I believe them to be a sound horse.

5983. But you have no experience as to that?—No, I have not.

5984. I think you were asked if the harness classes in which you said Hackneys had won were open, don't you know as a matter of fact that all the harness classes in the Dublin Show are open?—In the Dublin Show, yes.

5985. And for the last five or six years the majority of the prizes have been won by Hackney bred horses?—Yes.

5986. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I should like to ask a question or two, I know you know the formation of a horse very well and judge at shows, I would like to get your opinion as to the Hackney generally—not the Hackneys that may happen to be in Ireland at the present moment, but as a general rule I should like to know your opinion whether they have good shoulders as a rule?—I think the Yorkshire Hackneys have very good shoulders, and the Norfolk fair shoulders.

5987. Do you think as a rule that the Hackney is at all inclined to calf knees?—No, I should say not.

5988. You stated just now that you think that the Hackney has a very strong hock?—A good shaped hock.

5989. Strong good shaped hock as a rule?—Yes.

5990. Do you consider that they also as a rule have good second thighs?—Well, I think that is another point where the two types of Hackney differ, I think the Yorkshires have, and the Norfolks are inclined to be rather without second thighs.

5991. What do you consider their bone below the hock to be as a general rule?—I consider the Yorkshire Hackney bone very good, I may tell you that I think there is a tremendous difference between the two types of Hackneys.

5992. You think that the Yorkshire Hackney is strong boned below the hock as a rule?—I do.

5993. If they don't happen to be in very good condition is their middle piece as a rule good?—The better class of them are, but of course as in every breed of horses you will find animals deficient in certain points.

5994. You don't think they require much covering up with flesh?—I don't think so.

5995. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know any breed of horses better ribbed up than Hackneys?—I think they are just as well ribbed up as any breed I have seen

5996. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You only advocate him to get harness horses?—Oh, yes, and I should advocate a good hunter-shaped Hackney to be used with some of the weedy mares of the country.

5997. To get riding horses?—Yes, in default of being able to procure a good half-bred stallion.

5998. Would you ride an actual Hackney yourself?—I have never ridden one.

5999. You say you advocate the formation of Government studs?—Yes.

6000. Could you give us any idea as to how you would set about that, and whether you would have one large stud or in different provinces?—It is a complicated question to go into.

6001. Would you give us your idea with regard to the formation of Government studs?—I think studs should be formed with the idea of improving whatever breed of animal is most suitable to the district, in Meath I should only have good thoroughbred horses, if they could be got, and also thoroughbred mares, or perhaps strong half-bred mares, so that sires and mares suitable to breed hunters might be bred there. In the north I should have it almost entirely for harness horses, and in the south I should have studs to breed both sorts of animals, harness and hunter.

6002. How would you propose that that should be initiated?—That Government should buy the best procurable stallions of their respective breeds, they should also buy the best mares that would be likely to produce mares suitable to breed hunters from, or mares suitable to breed harness horses from.

6003. To do that they would have to take up a certain amount of ground and put up a certain amount of buildings?—They would.

6004. Would you recommend anything as to the number of brood mares they should keep and sires in the different establishments?—That would greatly depend on the amount of money that they would be prepared, if they did so at all, to give.

6005. Have you ever thought at all of what this scheme would cost Government?—Oh, no, because I don't know that Government would do it.

6006. What benefit do you think it would do to the country, how do you propose that the country should get the benefit of it?—I think it would give the farmer in two years' time, supposing it was started this year, in three years' time he would have a two-year-old mare which he could put to one of the Government horses, and I think if it was only a question of improving the stallions in the country it would take considerably longer than three years to improve the brood mares of the country.

6007. Your proposition is that Government should have its own mares, and breed its own young stock?—Yes.

6008. What is to become of that young stock?—That of course would be a question of arrangement, either that the animal should be sold by public auction, the mares I am talking of, or that the farmers should be able to come and claim one of these mares at a fixed price, and for a two-year-old I think, £20 would be a fair price, neither the Government would lose by it, or the farmer pay too much for the animal at that price.

6009. But then only a few farmers could take advantage of this?—Why.

6010. How many foals are you going to breed?—It would begin in a small way, but every year they would be increasing.

6011. Don't you think there would be a great outcry, that the farmers who had got bad young stock would say "The Government is breeding good stock, and we cannot sell our bad stock?"—I don't think people would object to that in the long run.

Captain W. F. SMITHWICK, Nenagh, examined.

6012. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county Tipperary?—Yes.

6013. Have you considerable experience in horse-breeding yourself?—Yes, I have been breeding horses for twenty-five years.

6014. You buy horses?—I buy a good many.

6015. And sell them again, what stallions have you generally used yourself?—I always use my own thoroughbred.

6016. What prices have you got for your young horses when you have sold them, did they pay you well?—I think they have paid me very well, I got as much as £120 and £130 and £150 for horses under three-year-old, several times.

6017. What mares were they out of?—The mares were half-bred mares.

6018. The ordinary half-bred mare of the country?—Yes.

6019. You say you buy some horses, what age do you generally buy them at?—I generally buy four-year-olds when I can.

6020. Do you break them?—Break them in, and hunt them a bit, and sell them.

6021. What class of horse is most suitable for your district?—I think the thoroughbred horse is most suitable. I don't know a bit about Hackneys. I have never seen them, and cannot say anything about them, we have not one in my part of the country.

6022. Are many horses bred by the farmers in your neighbourhood?—Yes, an immense number, and I think really that the chief cause of the low price of horses at present is due to over-supply, if you go to the fairs you will see three times as many horses as there were a few years ago, I think that is the great cause, I don't think they have deteriorated so much, the price of these has got very low, of course the best ones bring the same good prices, but the inferior ones don't bring more than about one-third what they did, and there is a great number unsaleable, I think it is over-supply.

6023. You think it is because there is too many horses?—Yes.

6024. Surely there is always a sale for high class horses?—Yes, but they cannot find sale for the inferior ones.

6025. Do you breed at all from two-year-olds?—I only once or twice bred from two-year-olds, and they turned out fairly well, but from all I have heard I think it is not desirable, but there is not such a thing as a two-year-old bred from in my part of the country.

6026. Do they feed the young horses well?—I think they do, but they do not breed from two-year olds.

6027. Are the stallions in your district generally suited for the mares of the district?—I think the stallions are quite good enough, it is the mares that want to be improved; the only thing that surprises me at all is that there is ever a good one bred there from the class of mares, a most miserable class of mares; they keep the unsaleable ones, a great number of the mares are not worth anything—they are useless.

6028. Can you suggest anything to enable them to keep better mares?—I made a suggestion, in reply to the queries here, which was that the mares should be bought by the Royal Dublin Society, or in some other way, and distributed about the country, and if they were sold out to the farmers on the instalment plan, three instalments, it would induce an immense number of farmers more to breed horses; I think that

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would be an advantage, and it would give them a far superior class of mares; they could easily get security, I myself would go security for a great number of farmers if they wanted to buy mares, and I think you could get very good mares, far superior to what they have, for £12 or £15.

6029. If they had these good mares, would they be sensible enough to mate them with good horses?—I think they would, I think the horses are quite good enough; what we want is to help the farmers to improve the mares, I don't think there is the smallest possibility in life of getting them to keep a good young one unless you made them rich, and then I don't think you would, for a great many rich people would sell their mares if they got a good price, and would not keep them for breeding.

6030. What age do they sell them at?—As a rule, three-year old and younger; rarely keep them longer, and that in a great measure induces them to send to the half-bred horse, because foals and yearlings got by a half-bred will look very often better than those got by a thoroughbred, and I think in that way they are encouraged to breed from half-bred horses.

6031. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme working in your district?—Yes.

6032. Has it done good?—I don't see it has done the smallest atom of good; I don't see how it can, when I mention there was £11 spent on mares in Nenagh district last year, that could not make much differ one way or the other; there were five mares registered in Nenagh district, and I don't see how that could affect them in any shape.

6033. In fact, you practically say you cannot improve the breed of horses in your district with the present class of mares?—It is the mares you must get at, I can see no other way, no, I can see no other way of improving the mares except by supplying them; you cannot possibly make the farmers keep their good mares.

6034. Is the land good around you?—Yes; some of the best horses in Ireland have come from there—Wild Man from Borneo came from my place and The Lamb.

6035. Do you think the farmer's mares at present are totally unsuitable?—I do; I think they are the worst mares.

6036. What stallion would you recommend for your district?—Oh, a strong thoroughbred stallion.

6037. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think just now you said that the Royal Dublin Society's scheme had done no good in your district?—None that I can perceive.

6038. Are you aware that it only deals with the small farmers under a certain valuation?—Yes.

6039. Not with the horseflesh of Ireland generally?—Yes. How could it be expected to do any good on £11 for the whole of the Nenagh district?

6040. You say you cannot devise any means to keep the good sound mares in the country?—I don't see any possible means of doing it. I have never heard any suggestion yet that was in the slightest way practicable.

6041. Are you aware that under the Dublin Society's scheme money is offered for foals?—I don't think any prize that can be given will ever make any difference.

6042. Are you aware that money is given to young mares, foals, two or three-year-old in foal or stinted to a registered sire?—Where was that given, in Dublin?

6043. No, in the districts?—It has never been given, I did not know that it was offered.

6044. It is open to give it, the local committee can give it under the rules of the Society, there is a rule to that effect. Now, supposing a two-year-old filly or a three-year-old filly was in foal, is it likely that a dealer would buy it to take away even if it was sound?—I don't think so, a dealer would never think of such a thing.

6045. Do you think that might prevent dealers from taking all the sound fillies out of Ireland, if they happened to be in foal at that early age?—I don't think it would, I don't think it would be an advantage to prevent dealers buying, I was reading Captain Donelan's evidence, and he seemed to advocate the very thing I have thought of, of buying up the mares and distributing them through the country at a low rate, of course the farmers have no opportunity of attending these sales and they have no other way of getting a brood mare except by keeping a worthless thing, they have no other way of getting them. I think broken-down hunters might be bought, I don't know much about omnibus and tram horses, they may be useful, I don't know, and perhaps cast troopers.

6046. Mr. WRENCH.—You think the farmers in your neighbourhood would take advantage of such a scheme if it was put within their reach?—I think they would take advantage of it, I am certain they would, we had a meeting of the North Tipperary Farming Society, and I proposed this scheme, and the meeting was very largely attended by the horse-breeding farmers, and they all seemed to take it up, and unanimously thought it was the best thing that was proposed, and they would be delighted with I am certain.

6047. Would you suggest that those mares should be branded or marked in some way?—I don't see any necessity.

6048. You don't think there would be any danger of those mares being sold again?—I don't think so, they would not be sold for anything but brood mares, the only way they could sell them would be amongst themselves, and if they did that it would be no disadvantage.

6049. You heard it suggested that there should be a register of all horses and brood mares in the district, would you approve of that?—I have not considered that, I think a Hunter Stud Book would be of great use in time to come, but it would be a long time before we could see the effect of it, I think a Hunter Stud Book is what we want because you would then get the intrinsic qualities of the horse, now if you get a half-bred horse he is always left to be a stallion without knowing what he is, he is an untried horse not selected for anything but because a man chooses to leave him.

6050. You think it would be worth the trouble of starting a Hunter Stud Book in Ireland?—I think in future it will be of use, but I don't think we will see the advantage of it, it takes a number of years to make a horse eligible.

Mr. John M. Kelly.

JOHN M. KELLY, Horseleap, examined.

6051. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Westmeath, I believe, and are a magistrate for that county?—Yes.

6052. What experience have you had in the way of horse-breeding?—I have been breeding horses all my life, and my father before me, and I have a sire at present, and I keep some thoroughbred brood mares, and one or two half-bred mares.

6053. Are many horses bred by the farmers in your district?—Oh, yes, a good many farmers breed now.

6054. What class of mares do they generally keep for breeding purposes?—Half-bred mares.

6055. What class of sires do they mate with?—When they can accomplish it they always go to the thoroughbred sires.

6056. Do the farmers appreciate the advantage of a suitable sire to mate with their mares, or by what considerations are they influenced when selecting the sire?—If they can manage the price they always go to

the thoroughbred horse, if they can manage the money they will always go to the best horse, but unfortunately the great majority are not able, they are getting more enlightened every day as regards the thoroughbred.

6057. In your district are the horses standing at a reasonable fee usually?—Well, the thoroughbred horses are £5, and for half-bred mares and some thoroughbred mares perhaps less, a little less, I don't know really.

6058. There is a sufficient number of suitable stallions in the district?—There are now, there are a good many stallions in the locality, years ago there were a great number of good horses but they fell away, and I attribute an immensity in the falling off in the mares to the want of good horses, there are bad half-bred horses, and the want of thoroughbred horses. Now for the last few years they are creeping up again and there is more thoroughbred blood in the country.

6059. Where do the farmers sell their young horses, and are the prices as remunerative as in former years?—If a farmer has a good horse now, he may be bought up in the house from him or at the fairs, there are plenty of men to buy them. But really what has filled up our fairs with these wretched horses is they have come up from the West, they have come up when foals, within the last ten days I have seen 200 of these wretched foals coming from the congested districts, from Galway, and they are brought from Ballinasloe through the country.

6060. You could trace them at the fairs?—At the large fairs in Mullingar I saw these wretched little horses, and I think they have done an immensity of mischief, when they came up as ponies they were very good, but now I think they have deteriorated immensely and are ruining our horses.

6061. Have you had any experience in the breeding of Hackneys?—No, I never breed from them and would not breed from them. There was one Hackney in my locality and I would not breed from him at any price. I saw a most remarkable thing with regard to one of his get, I knew the mare, she had a foal from this Hackney horse, and she was sent to a thoroughbred horse the following year, and it is most remarkable the difference between the two foals, one of whom is one and a half and the other two and a half years old, one you would have, the other you would not care for.

6062. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Which one would you have?—The one by the thoroughbred horse.

6063. CHAIRMAN.—What class of stallion do you consider most suited for breeding high-class harness horses?—The thoroughbred, I think the thoroughbred action is before anything in the world, the motion of the thoroughbred horse is to be preferred to that of any other animal in the world. I think the Hackney and these Clydesdale and Yorkshire horses have ruined the country wherever they have come into it.

6064. Do you consider the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has had any beneficial effect in your neighbourhood?—I think it had a good deal, because in the first place it registers the stallions, and the farmers when they have a registered horse near them go to him, because they say he is a sound horse, he won't be registered unless, and I am glad to say unsound horses are going out very fast. As for their scheme as regards the mares, I think the present scheme is not as good as it ought to be, I think that instead of giving prizes to mares in the month of October, I believe in seeing the mares brought up in the spring and then have them judged there and give them nominations to a thoroughbred horse or registered horse, the farmer paying some of the money, and then they would go to the good horse. I have been judging the mares for the last few years in the King's County, at Tullamore and Parsonstown, for the Royal Dublin Society, and I don't think it is working, I think there were only two young mares in each place this year.

6065. You have heard in evidence about the half-bred stallion, what is your opinion as regards them?—What is called the half-bred may be very close on the thoroughbred, although he is not in the stud book, I would not turn him out; there are a great number of them with a slight stain, and I certainly would not reject those, but soundness above everything in the world. I think stallion owners are to blame, if you will, for allowing their sires to serve unsound mares, I think they should be more particular, I think they should reject unsound mares, and if they did you would find the unsoundness would wear away very quickly. I know I for one would reject all unsound mares, and I have done so.

6066. Do you think that the mares in the district are as good as they were in former years;—I do not, and I attribute it to the bad half-bred horses and the want of the thoroughbred blood. In my recollection years ago we had plenty of well-bred horses in it, and the mares and the class of cattle were far before what they are now. There was no end of good horses, Vulcan and Coroner, all those good horses went away, and these half-bred horses cropped up, and the farmers bred from them whenever they could. Years ago they bred from the good horses that I distinctly remember, but now there are a good many horses spread over the country thoroughbred, and I hope soon through the Royal Dublin Society there will be more; I think really their scheme is a very good one, if they would improve it in that way so as to give the nominations to the mares in spring to sires that have been registered.

6067. That would be more or less an amalgamation of the two schemes?—It might be that, but say, let the farmer pay £1, and instead of giving a prize let the Royal Dublin Society pay the balance, it would work better than the present scheme.

6068. Have you any other observations to make with a view of encouraging the industry of horse-breeding?—Well, I certainly would like to see good sires go down to the congested districts, because we are the sufferers in the Midland Counties with these wretched little foals coming up and bought at from £2 to £4 each, and the farmer when he gets a foal at £2 he will be anxious to keep him on, and when he is four-year-old he is not worth £4, not worth anything; you will see the fairs crowded with these wretched animals, I saw at least 200 come up this year and bought in the streets and fairs here, come up in a large string, twenty in a lot, and bought by farmers and shopkeepers in towns, and then they come into the fairs and they are looked on as being horses bred in the country when we have had nothing at all to say to them.

6069. What is the oldest you have seen them come up?—Only foals, this year's foals, I have seen a couple of hundred of them this year coming up at different times, and I think if there were good sires down in those parts we would have a chance of good foals, because these people sell their foals, I understand, and they come up to us. When they bred ponies, the ponies were very good, but now those are not ponies, neither are they horses.

6070. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What do you think in your part of the country the farmers would be able and willing to give for the service of a good class of horse?—I am very sure they would give £1 a mare, some of them would give more, as I said they are getting more enlightened every day, and the first thing they do is to inquire whether a horse is sound, and whether he is registered and that sort of thing.

6071. I think you said that the horses that stood down there covered even half-bred mares at about £5?—Well, there may be some thoroughbred horses, I believe there are, that cover at a little less, a well-bred thoroughbred horse cannot be let less because he costs a good deal himself.

6072. My question referred to a good class of stallion either thoroughbred or nearly so, the farmers then, I suppose, don't go to that class of horse at all, do they?—Some of them do when they can do it.

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6073. They don't go to those that charge £5 a mare?—A few of them do, I have reason to know that.

6074. You say the foals come up out of the west in large numbers and over-run your district, and you think damage the breeding of the district in consequence?—I am quite sure they do.

6075. Whatever class of stallion was sent down into the west I presume it would be the same thing?—They will all sell their foals, there ought to be a good thoroughbred horse sent down to the west, I would say.

6076. And for that reason you think there ought to be a good well-bred horse sent down there?—Quite so.

6077. And you should infinitely prefer if possible a thoroughbred to any other?—Certainly.

6078. And if you could not get enough thoroughbreds would you like a half-bred?—Well, if there was a well-bred half-bred horse with very little stain in him, and there are a good many of them spread about the country.

6079. If this half-bred horse does not exist now and a demand is created for stallions do you think they could be produced in a short time?—I think they could, you will always be able to buy thoroughbred horses.

6080. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I gather from what you say that there has always been an influx of a certain number of animals from the west into the centre of Ireland?—Yes.

6081. And you think that will always continue, and therefore whatever is bred in the west must permeate through into the centre of the country?—Quite sure, I am certain it will; for years they are sending out their foals brought up by dealers, twenty or thirty at a time. When they were ponies they were very good animals, now the animals that are coming are very inferior, so if there was a good sire or sires in that part of the world I think it would do an immensity of good.

6082. You could not confine any particular animal to a particular district?—I don't know it sufficiently for that, but I would not have the Clydesdale or those other horses on any consideration.

6083. I mean supposing any particular animal was brought into a certain part of the country you don't think it could be retained there, it must filter through to the rest of the country?—I think it must.

6084. Mr. WRENCH. — Where in the congested districts do these foals come from?—I really cannot tell you, I know they come on through Galway and Ballinasloe, and up the country.

6085. You don't know where they come from?—They come from the west somewhere, the mountainous districts, I always heard.

6086. You have no personal knowledge as to the districts they come from?—I have not, I think they come from all the west down with dealers.

6087. Up to the present you have only seen the foals?—Well an occasional 1½ year old

6088. You have seen nothing older than 1½ year old?—Certainly not.

6089. Then it is mere anticipation that you think they will only grow up to be worth £4?—I have seen them over and over again that they could not be sold when they are threes and fours, I have seen them in our fairs.

6090. But do you know that there are no animals got by the Congested Districts Board stallions that are four-year-old, they have not been long enough in the country, so you are speaking of animals that came up before that time?—I am looking at them coming up for years, and it is very hard to sell them when they come to age, they are so badly made you know them at once.

6091. You are speaking of what was in the past, not what will be in the future?—Say for the last ten years.

6092. But you know the Board's stallions have only been in the country four years?—Yes.

6093. And these foals you think are not likely ever to be worth more than £4 or £5?—They look very badly now, it is very hard to judge of foals.

6094. But you think these will grow into animals only worth £4 or £5?—Those I have seen for the last few years, I have seen them in the locality and they were worth absolutely nothing or £4 or £5.

6095. Those are what you have seen at five or six years old?—Yes.

6096. Then, as a matter of fact, you know that those could not have been by any of the Hackney stallions?—If they are only four years there they could not.

6097. None of their produce is older than three years?—Then I cannot say I saw them.

6098. Then you are merely speaking about the animals from the west and not specially about the animals got by the Hackney stallions?—Oh, I am only speaking of them as they came up to us.

6099. And you don't know how they are bred?—I don't know how they are bred.

6100. Are any of those animals used as hunter brood mares?—Oh, well, I should say not.

6101. So there is no danger of the Westmeath farmers making use of them in that way?—I daresay the farmers may breed from them.

6102. But you don't think they would produce valuable hunters?—Any of them I ever saw would not.

6103. As a matter of fact are not the mares in Westmeath as good mares as any in Ireland?—They were very good.

6104. But are they not at present?—I am afraid not, and I give my reasons, they are bred from bad half-bred sires for some time past, and there has been a want of thoroughbred blood, but the last three years a good many thoroughbred horses have come into the country and I really hope for better animals from thenceforward.

The Commission adjourned to the following Tuesday.

TWELFTH DAY.—TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1ST, 1896.

Dec. 1, 1896.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN (in the Chair); LORD RATHDONNELL, MR. FREDERICK WRENCH, and MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Major J. H. CONNELLAN, Coolmore, Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, examined.

Major J. H. Connellan.

6105. CHAIRMAN.—Major Connellan, you are resident in the County Kilkenny?—Yes, my lord.

6016. What part of the county?—Rather south of the middle—a little south of the middle of the county.

6017. You are a Justice of the Peace for the county?—Yes.

6108. Have you had personal experience in horse-breeding?—Yes; I have been breeding for myself the last twelve years, and I have been associated with my father in breeding, more or less, for the last five and twenty years.

6109. What class of horses?—Well, I have bred a great many from thoroughbred horses. I have bred a certain number from half-bred horses and a few from horses of what I would call the country cart-horse class—not many; one or two.

6110. What do you mean by the country cart-horse?—What they call the common horse in the country is a horse bred with a certain amount of Irish blood in him, no doubt, but with several crosses of the Clydesdale and other sires.

6111. Clydesdale?—Clydesdale. Some of them have got the Clydesdale blood in them. It is very hard to define how some of them are bred.

6112. Do you know where they get the Clydesdale strain?—A certain number have stood in the county—Clydesdale sires.

6113. Are there any there now?—Yes; three or four.

6114. Have you a good opinion of that cross?—Not of that cross-bred sire—not as a rule.

6115. Do you consider your district a suitable one for the breeding of horses?—Yes; particularly the southern end of the county.

6116. What is the character of the soil?—The greater part of it is limestone.

6117. And do the farmers breed much about you?—They breed a great deal in the southern part of the county. It has always been more or less a good horse-breeding district. They breed a great deal in the northern district, too, but they do not breed such a good type at all as they do in the south.

6118. What is that attributable to?—It is attributable in a certain degree to the fact that in the northern part of the county they have not got many thoroughbred stallions. In the southern end they have got more thoroughbreds, and they always used to breed a good class of hunter for the last century in the southern end in a district they used to call the Welsh mountains.

6119. In the southern part of the county the soil is more suitable, is it?—I don't know that it is; there is a great deal of rough soil there, but the farmers have got greater taste for breeding than in the north.

6120. Is there a better class of mares in the southern than in the northern part?—Decidedly.

6121. What class do you think it pays the farmers to breed?—A good type of hunter.

6122. Do they breed much for harness purposes?—To a certain extent, what they aim mostly at is to sell a hunter if they can, in the southern part particularly they sell a certain number of troopers as well. They have got a large buyer of troopers in the neighbourhood, and hunters as well. They have got a very good market down there.

6123. What class of horses have you been breeding yourself and your father before you?—Mostly we have aimed at breeding a hunter.

6124. Do you think there has been any falling off in the quality of the mares generally in the district?—I do. I see it in fairs; I see it in shows; and I see it in exhibitions under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

6125. To what do you attribute this falling off?—If you will allow me, I will tell you the history of how this depreciation of the mares has been arrived at. The old Irish mare, with which everybody is familiar, was used a great deal in the early part of the century, and up to the middle of the century. At that time, the early part of the century particularly, farm carts were very small things; they were generally on block wheels; and were what they called low-backed cars, and only carried a certain quantity of weight, and the farmer did not require a big strong horse. As time went on, these carts became larger, and a demand arose for horses for van purposes, for brewers' drays, and latterly for drawing mowing and reaping machines, working threshing machines, and they required still a larger sort of cart horse for that purpose, and they began to breed them from a larger stallion; Clydesdales were introduced, and they crossed them with these old mares; and they went in for other crosses, and gradually the type of the old clean-legged Irish mare was lost to a great extent in that way from crossing.

6126. And the present class of mare is not as good in your opinion as the old class?—No, I think not. I have had some myself, and I have one now of the old type, and she is the best cart horse I have.

6127. When you say not as good, do you mean not as good for producing hunters or the type of horse that there is a demand for now, the heavy horse?—I think they would not pay a farmer so well to breed from as the old mare; they would not get a class as good.

6128. Do you know at all how long there have been Clydesdales in your part of the country?—Certainly, for twenty years there have been, and more. They have been gradually coming in in larger numbers.

6129. And in the south part of the county, what is your opinion generally of the stallions—the thoroughbred stallions I mean?—There are some very good ones kept in Waterford by the Messrs. Widger, and there are other ones standing about. There are a certain number too light of bone, in my opinion, throughout the whole county.

6130. And in the northern part?—In the northern part there are very few thoroughbred stallions at all, except a few that come in travelling from other counties, and stand a day here and there. There are two or three baronies in the northern part of the county which have not got a thoroughbred horse, I think.

6131. Are there any half-bred stallions?—There are what they call half-bred stallions, but they are crosses of various sorts; some of them by half-bred horses and so on; some of them pretty good ones, and some of them not much good.

6132. Would you approve of breeding from half-bred sires?—I do, to a certain extent; for certain mares I do. I have known some mares, mares that I have had myself, that did badly with a thoroughbred horse, and that did fairly well with a half-bred horse. There are certain classes of mares that do not suit thoroughbred horses.

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6133. What would you put them to?—I would put them to a thoroughly sound half-bred horse, or to a horse with a good deal of blood in him, three-quarters bred or a really good half-bred horse.

6134. Would you prefer that to the Clydesdale or the Hackney?—In our county there is only one Hackney, and it has been there only a short time, so that as far as our mares are concerned I would not say anything about the Hackney. I think a good half-bred with bone, with good style and action about him, suit some mares better than a thoroughbred horse, particularly as some thoroughbred horses are light of bone.

6135. How long has the Hackney been in your country?—Only two years; we cannot judge what his stock are yet.

6136. Do you know the horse yourself?—I don't know him, I have never seen him; I only know what others have said about him.

6137. You cannot express any opinion as to the value or reverse of Hackney blood?—No, so far as my own county is concerned. I have seen them in England. I have had some experience of them in England in a large manufacturing town that I lived near for some years. They bred a certain class of Hackney to do a spin on a bank-holiday, and that kind of thing, and he was not a good horse.

6138. Would you like to express any opinion to the Commission as to the probable effect generally of the introduction of Hackney blood into the country?—Not except in this way—that I think generally we ought to pause before we do anything to introduce any particular breed which is likely to oust the thoroughbred horse. Beyond that I am not prepared to say anything. We live very far from any congested district in our part of the world.

6139. In your opinion, Major Connellan, is there a tendency on the part of the farmers to part with their best mares, to sell them, and breed from an inferior class of mare?—Decidedly, and in certain districts very much so. In other districts the farmers seem to understand breeding better, and they often stick to a good mare. Down in the southern end a good many of them do, but taking the whole country all round they are far too apt to get rid of their good mares and to breed from old inferior mares.

6140. Is that tendency greater than it used to be?—I think it is. I think they sell their young mares more readily than they used to.

6141. What is your opinion as to the desirability of breeding from sound good mares?—I think that any good young mare from three years old and upwards is worth keeping by any farmer if he can make any use of her.

6142. I mean, rather, relatively to the importance of the stallion. Do you think it is equally important to breed from a good mare as it is to breed from a good sire?—Oh, certainly.

6143. And can you suggest any way in which farmers can be induced to keep their best mares?—Yes, I can. Perhaps if you would allow me I would read some ideas that I put down on the subject of that, and of the thoroughbred horse as well. They are not altogether my own ideas; they are partially derived from the hints of other people and partly from my own observation. There are some points on which I think some remedy might be found. First, I would have a more rigorous selection of thoroughbred sires, and I would register none that got a weedy or unsound stock. This would entail some expense and some trouble, but it would prevent much unsoundness, for some of the registered stallions I know of have been notorious for getting unsound stock. I would class these as Class I. on the register. I would have a classified register. I would make a second class, and would register in it three-quarter-bred sires—that is, sires having three thoroughbred crosses to one strain, provided the sire had good action and shape and was sound. Third, I would have all sires examined, if possible, and to those which were sound I would award a certificate of soundness and suitability, provided they had good shape and action. This would let in some of the country sires which had been getting a very saleable stock and which the farmers like to use, and I think it would gradually drive out the unsound and nondescript stallion. I would put these as Class III. on the register, but I should be inclined to say that the first two only might be subsidised. The third class I would leave to be used by the farmers as they liked, but would give them a certificate of soundness and suitability. Fourthly, I would give premiums to all sound, well-shaped mares from three to ten years old covered by one of the registered thoroughbred stallions, or possibly by one of the second class. Fifthly, I would register the foals of such mares, giving the owner a certificate as to its breeding, and giving its colour and any marks tending to identify it, so that the owner could produce a warranty as to its breeding when he was selling it. This would enhance the value for sale, and would do away with fictitious pedigree-making, and it would be more easily carried out than at first it may appear. I would subsidise all selected sires, so that small farmers owning the premium mares I mentioned could have their service at a low fee—that is, all selected sires of the first two classes. I would leave the farmers themselves to deal with the third class. I am aware that none of these remedies taken by itself would have any great effect, but I believe if all those suggestions were adopted a more saleable horse would come into the market than is now the case, and this in a few years time.

6144. You think that in selecting the sires, as I understand, they ought to be selected not only in view of the soundness of the horse itself and its qualification, but in view of the stock that he has got?—I do, and I am driven to that conclusion by knowing stallions which were registered—and I have got one particularly in my mind—and which were notorious for getting unsound stock. Nearly all the stock were unsound. That horse is not registered now, and he is not in the country, I am glad to say, but there are others besides.

6145. If you take the stock into consideration and that it turns out bad, what would you do—deprive the horse of his certificate?—Yes, I should do that. His continuing on the register, and continuing to get unsound stock cannot be a good thing for the country.

6146. You propose to grant a certificate to the stallion, not anything in the nature of a license?—Well, a license would lead to legislation of course. You could not do that without legislation, but at the same time I think the effect of giving a horse a certificate for soundness and suitability—for his shape as well as his soundness—would help in time to drive inferior and unsound stallions out of the country.

6147. By what machinery would you suggest that all this should be carried out?—It could be done in an amplified way under the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society by amplifying the existing scheme to a certain extent. It would entail some money and some trouble.

6148. Do you think it should be done by the Royal Dublin Society?—That I am not prepared to say. The scheme of the Royal Dublin Society has worked very well in some districts, and not so well in others. It has worked unequally it seems to me. That may be the fault of the farmers, not the fault of the Royal Dublin Society. But in some cases the mares exhibited have been very poor. In others they have been very good. Very often the farmers don't like the distance; they say they have got to go so far. If they have got to go 20 miles with a mare you don't get at the best mares sometimes. I have heard some farmers with good mares say "we don't like to go so far; it is a very long way; we might not get selected when we go there."

6149. It would be a rather formidable undertaking to do this all over the country?—Yes, but I think

unless something very drastic is done you cannot hope to achieve much improvement.

6150. Assuming that some scheme of that kind could be undertaken, do you think it ought to be carried out in localities by local societies?—Yes, by local societies and, no doubt, inspectors would have to be appointed, I suppose, and veterinary surgeons would have to be paid for the examination of these animals.

6151. I mean if there was any money grant or money from the Royal Dublin Society or some central body, do you think it ought to be entrusted to local people?—Yes, I do, because I think the local people would be more likely to get at the horses. They would know the locality.

6152. Do you think the farmers generally in your district are good judges as to the best sort of sire to suit their mares, and so on?—Yes, It hink the farmers in the southern end of the county breed with a good deal of judgment, and they have always done so. They have got a taste for horse-breeding. In the northern part of the county they have not got it so much. They go for the low class of fee, and the proximity of the stallion. That is what governs a great many of them.

6153. Do you think generally that the quality and the quantity of the horses have improved or deteriorated or remained about the same?—Well, I think there are just as many horses bred to-day. You see that from the local fairs. You see a great many horses there, but you see an enormous preponderance of horses not sold at all. They have a great many defects; of course I am aware that there are a number of dealers in the country by whom they are picked up before they get into the fairs. Before all went to the fairs, now a great many of the horses are picked up before they get into the fairs. You don't see many five-year-old horses in the fairs now, they are nearly all from two to four-year-olds.

6154. Do you think that the price of the better quality horse—the hunter and the harness horse—is kept up?—No. For the high class horse the price probably is as good as ever; for the second class horse—the harness horse of the lower grades there is a considerable depreciation—a depreciation of 30 to 40 per cent. I know that from buying and selling myself. At the same time I will say this, that if a horse has got some style and action he will find a market; there will be a market for him, he will be bought.

6155 About these Clydesdale sires, would you have them registered also?—Well, they certainly ought to be examined I think as to their soundness.

6156. You would not endeavour to eliminate them out of the country?—No, I don't think I would, because there are some of them that get a very good stock—thoroughly good and sound. But taking them generally I don't think they have been a good cross for that part of Ireland. They didn't suit the little old Irish mare I think at all.

6157. Mr. WRENCH.—What are the chief selling fairs in your district?—Well, there is Kilkenny and New Ross, and there is Waterford, and in next county, Clonmel, that a great many of the Kilkenny horses get into.

6158. Clonmel is the chief fair for the good horses?—Yes, but there are a good many sold in New Ross in the county of Wexford. It is a large horse fair.

6159. Would you be in favour of registering any of these half-bred sires that have not been proved by their stock?—No, I would say that every horse should be proved by his stock as well as by his appearance.

6160. So that you would make good stock a *sine qua non*?—Yes, I have been driven to that conclusion as the best thing to do.

6161. I think you said you would also set up registration of the foals?—Yes.

6162. Have you thought by what machinery you would carry out the registration?—No. I think that would be a most troublesome thing to work, but at the same time it would do away with what everybody must see goes on at the fairs—the little bit of pedigree making that goes on. It would be a sort of hall-mark on the foal.

6163. Did you hear it has been suggested to us by two or three witnesses that the registration should be carried out by the Petty Sessions Clerk?—I have not heard that.

6164. Do you think that that would be a practical suggestion?—He might be put down to carry out the mere mechanical part of it. But of course the horses would have to be examined by somebody else.

6165. Oh, of course; I mean merely as to registration?—Yes, as to registration. I think he would do very well.

6166. Do you think that if registration was established the people would fall in with it?—Yes, I think the farmers would see the advantage of it if they got a good foal.

6167. Do you think that being able to give a true pedigree of a horse in selling to a dealer would put his value up?—Yes, and I think it would put the value up to the man who bought him; if a dealer bought him he might add to his price in selling again by saying "I have a certificate of the breeding of this animal."

6168. You said you would give premiums to mares to encourage the farmers to keep their good mares?—Yes.

6169. Have you thought of the amount at all?—No; that would depend upon the amount of money available for the purpose.

6170. But say a premium of £10—do you think a premium of £10 would make the farmer keep a valuable mare if he were offered a good price for her?—Yes, I think it would tend to do so. It might not in every case, but many farmers would do it.

6171. Do you think that action is a valuable item in selling a dealer any horse?—Dealers look for action.

6172. CHAIRMAN.—Has the Royal Dublin Society's scheme been in operation in your part of the country?—Yes.

6173. Is it generally successful?—Yes. I was talking yesterday to the Chairman, Mr. Smithwick, who knows as much about the breeding of horses as any one in Ireland; he is an excellent judge himself; he said that in some districts it had been successful, but he said he was afraid that they didn't keep their best mares, and that they didn't come up; he saw an improvement in the foals within the last two or three years; there was a better class of foals bred; but taking it all in all he thought the best mares did not come forward, and that the class of mares they had to adjudicate on were not as really good as those were in the country.

6174. Do you know how much the Society have to spend in your district?—I think it is from £80 to £90 as well as I remember, but I am not quite certain. I did know, but I forget.

6175. I gather from you that this matter of the registration of foals would be a purely voluntary matter?—A purely voluntary matter. I may state that that was a suggestion made to me. I thought of something of the kind myself, but it was made to me by a man who thoroughly understands the breeding of horses, and whose father for fifty years bred as high class hunters as any man in the county.

6176. You think it would pay the farmer to be able to produce this registration—that he would get a better price?—I do; it would make people certain that the pedigree was right.

6177. And as to the stallions, that would be voluntary also; if a man chose to have his stallion examined he would get a certificate; if he did not chose to he need not?—He need not, but the chances are that he would if the stallion was sound.

6178. As to the mares, you would give a direct premium?—I would give a direct premium to the mares.

6179. And the effect of that would be to tend to

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keep the better class of mares in the country; of course the result would depend largely upon the amount of the premium?—It would, of course.

6180. Did you read the whole of the paper?—I have given you evidence on most of it, but these were suggestions.

6181. Is there anything else on the paper you would like to read?—I will look at it; it is only roughly made out. I would say that in my belief the very small farmer cannot make horse-breeding pay; he cannot afford the fee as a rule; he cannot afford to feed the foal in the first year; they want feeding when they are young, and as a rule the small farmer cannot afford to do that. I have seen a great many colts sold for a very low price, even up to four years old. I think if a farmer could get £10 for every year he would do very well—that is £10 the first year, £20 for the second, and up to £40 for a four-year-old. But very few can do that at all. The majority do not get that price at all. If he could do that he would do very well. But when you see a four-year-old, and I saw plenty of them sold in fairs for £15—I saw one the other day, not a bad one, for £14—if they are sold from £15 to £18 one must conclude that that won't pay. A four-year-old bullock would pay him a great deal better.

6182. Do yot think, as a rule, they feed their foals properly?—The small farmers do not. The large farmers, who go in for breeding, do. They give them a little bran and turnips, and perhaps oats and hay in winter, or else they put them on good grass when there is plenty of it to keep for the winter. The small farmer cannot do that; he has not got the land.

6183. If, as you say, that it cannot, in your opinion, pay the small farmer, won't that cure itself, the small farmer will give up breeding?—Many of them keep on trying it. You see the small farmer bringing a colt into the fair and selling him for £18 or £16 as a four-year-old; I don't think that can pay him. The better class of farmers can make it pay; they have got some feeding to give their colts; the others have not.

6184. We should like to hear anything you can tell us on this or any other points?—I was saying that some mares do not suit the thoroughbred. I have tried them myself. I have had a mare—a small cob mare—that I brought over from England; I tried her with a thoroughbred horse and she never produced a foal worth anything. I sent her to a good half-bred horse in the country that I knew was getting good stock, and I have a horse by him now—the best general utility horse I ever had. There are some mares that do not produce good stock from a thoroughbred, also there have been some horses in the country which have been getting good foals—half-bred horses, sound horses. They get a stock that farmers can readily sell, and I think it would be a pity to do anything to push them out. But I say I would have them selected, put on a register by themselves, and if the farmers found that these were horses getting the best stock they would gradually give up going to local sires that did not get good stock. What they want is to have sires evenly distributed throughout the country. In some parts of the country there are plenty; in others too few, except inferior ones.

6185. You think the distance is a serious consideration to the farmer?—Yes, I do. If the farmer has to go a long distance, 15, or 16, or 18 miles—if he has to do that again and again to bring his mare for her trials, it entails a good deal of trouble and time, and they won't do it.

6186. Do they leave their foals out all the winter?—Yes, a great many do. If they have got a run on a hill or anything of that kind they will leave them out.

6187. Do you wish to say anything else to the Commission?—I should like to say, generally, that I believe myself the thoroughbred horses are the best horses for our county, for they have generally proved themselves to be the best horses, if you get the right type of horse.

6188. I gather from you that you think that the thoroughbred horse is best, except for certain mares, and that you think for them a half-bred horse with a considerable number of thoroughbred crosses in him would be best?—Yes, if he has got shape and action and gets good stock, I think he suits some mares better.

6189. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You are aware that the money at the disposal of the Royal Dublin Society is very limited?—Yes, I know that.

6190. Your scheme with regard to premiums and registration would cost money?—Oh, yes.

6191. Do you think if the money was there all difficulties could be got over?—Of course, I think that if the money was increased more would be done. I am aware about the difficulty. I think if every suggestion I make were carried out there would still be a certain difficulty. But I think it would tend very much to improve the breed of horses through the country.

6192. Even if it did cost money, if the money was forthcoming you could get over all difficulties?—Well it would tend to smooth away the difficulties.

6193. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything more you would like to say?—I think not, my lord.

Mr. John Charles Foott.

Mr. JOHN CHARLES FOOTT, West Lodge, Tullow, examined.

6194. CHAIRMAN.—You live at West Lodge, Co. Waterford?—Yes, sir.

6195. Have you had any personal experience of horse-breeding?—For five and twenty years.

6196. What class of horses do you breed?—Generally hunters, and some of them turned out good carriage horses, but they were chiefly hunters.

6197. Your object is to get hunters, I suppose?—Yes.

6198. And if he does not do for a hunter?—He does for a carriage horse if he has action enough.

6199. What kind of mares do you breed from?—Well, I breed from the one stock for forty years. She was an old mare as far as I could understand. My father bought her, and she was a "Merry Andrew" and the sire was "Lottery." At that time they were the very best horses that were kept in our part of the country. That was the information I got as to my old mare's dam—that was forty years ago when she would have been born you know. The old mare I have now is twenty-five years of age.

6200. How many mares have you now?—I have four now, sir.

6201. You generally have about that number?—Three, four, and two.

6202. Have you any stallion of your own?—No, sir.

6203. What class of stallion do you put your mares to?—Well, I try to suit—chiefly thoroughbreds. If I can get them to suit the mares I would have nothing but a thoroughbred, but I would rather have a three quarters bred stallion than a bad thoroughbred.

6204. Sooner have a good three quarters bred?—Yes; I would expect to have something out of him, nothing out of the other.

6205. Is your part of the country well supplied with thoroughbred stallions?—Fairly.

6206. And half-bred?—Oh, any amount of half-breds, and the worst breeds—wretched things.

6207. Most of the half-bred horses are wretched things in your opinion, they are not much account?—Oh, not at all. The small farmers think they would

make a living by having an inferior animal—very often they give him out cheap.

6208. What age do you generally sell your produce at?—I generally let them run until they are four-year olds. I bring them in then and break them, you may say, until they are five. They are five when I sell them.

6209. Do you sell them at fairs or direct to the dealers?—Well, I sell to dealers, or sometimes gentlemen buy from me and take them over to England. I have sold a good many to dealers.

6210. Do you breed from two-year-olds?—Oh, no, sir, I would not approve of it at all; it ruins them; it makes weeds of them; they never grow. My idea is that the nourishment that would go to support the foal—that the mother would require it for herself to develop her. I would breed from a three-year-old and then she would have a foal at four.

6211. Is it at all customary in your part of the country to breed from two-year-olds?—Yes, a great many of them do. They are under the idea that a three-year-old mare will not breed, which is a fallacy. They are under the idea that a two-year-old will, and that a three-year-old will not, but I have found them to always.

6212. What class of horse do you use on your farm—do you breed your own farm horses?—No; I have very little tillage, and I have a common old horse that does that for me. I would rather pay for the tillage being done than keep a bad horse.

6213. Are there small holdings or large holdings about you?—A good many of them are small—40, 50, 100, 150, and 200 acres. Some of them are smaller than that; some are 30 acres.

6214. Do the occupiers of the small holdings of twenty or thirty acres—do they breed?—They do, if they have a mare. They are under the idea that it is a great thing to have a mare in foal not knowing what the offspring may turn out, and that they would make money some day or other at the fair.

6215. Do you think that the mares in your district are as good as they used to be?—Yes, we have some very good mares in our district; they are good mares.

6216. Are they as good or better than they used to be?—Well, they are more breedy than they were. I don't think they have altogether the same amount of bone. They are of a different class. They are longer in the legs and longer in the bodies than the old class of mares that I remember.

6217. Not such good bone?—Not as good bone.

6218. Would you consider that to be a falling off in the quality or not?—Well, I would not.

6219. And as to the sires, are they sound as a rule—the thoroughbred sires?—Well, some of them are.

6220. I don't want to specify particular ones, I want your general opinion?—Well, I don't know. Oh, there are some of them—I would not say they all are. A great many of them are not.

6221. Are they as good as they used to be in former days?—I think not. They may have bigger pedigrees, but I don't think they are as good as some of the old sires.

6222. Do you think the farmers are more inclined than they used to be to sell their best mares, and to breed from inferior ones?—Oh, yes.

6223. Why is that?—Poverty. They are so poor they cannot afford to keep them.

6224. Do you think that it is on account of the farmer being poorer, or on account of the fact that foreign or other governments will give more money for the mare?—No; to depression in all sorts of produce. They cannot afford it. And then the landlord requires his rent, and they think if they owe £20, and they can get £30 or £40 for a good brood mare, they will pay the landlord—that is if they are inclined—but a good many of them are not, whether they have it or not, and that will leave a balance of £20, and that goes to pay the shopkeeper.

6225. That must have always been the case more or less?—I don't know. I think it is more so now.

6226. Do you know where these mares go to—do they go abroad?—I think they go to the foreigners.

6227. Within your recollection does the foreigner buy more than he used?—I think he buys now more than ever he did.

6228. Do you house and feed your young stock in the winter?—No, sir.

6229. Let them run?—Yes.

6230. Let them run until they are four-year-olds?—Until they are four-year-olds. From the time they are weaned I let them run. I think it is the very best thing. I don't approve of pampering animals at all. I let them run and it develops their muscles, of course giving them a little feeding. I would not do that on the top of a mountain. I would like to have them in a place of shelter. I have particularly good shelter myself. Perhaps what I do would not suit everyone. I have very good shelter, and I have houses on some of my places, but they would rather stop out than go into the houses.

6231. Do you hand-feed at all?—Nothing, except during a bad winter I give them a little hay. They have plenty of grass to eat on the land, and a fine run.

6232. Are there any Clydesdale or Hackney sires in your part of the country?—No, sir.

6233. And you have no experience of breeding from Hackneys or Clydesdales?—No, I have not—none.

6234. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation about you?—Yes, sir.

6235. What have been its effects in your opinion?—Well, I think I cannot say it is doing very much. It does not give enough money. £100 in the County Waterford is a very poor thing. I believe it is very difficult to get the money, so we must be thankful.

6236. Do you know how long it has been in operation in the County Waterford?—Three or four years, I think.

6237. As to prices that you get for the stock you produce, are you getting as good prices as you did fifteen or twenty years ago—bigger prices or less prices?—Less prices. I get more now than I did then, demand and supply, most of these good horses go to England.

6238. Do you know what kind of prices they get for an inferior class of horse—is the price as good as it used to be?—Oh, no, sir, a very bad price. No one cares for an inferior class of horse; they are worthless.

6239. They are not worth now as much as they were?—No, sir.

6240. Do you think anything could be done to persuade or induce the farmers to keep their best mares to breed from instead of selling them?—I do; I think by giving larger prizes, and by allowing a longer time for going in for those shows. I would limit the age to fifteen instead of four. A great many people may have a mare; she may be a very useful mare; she may be hunted until she is twelve or thirteen; and then she breaks down, it would be very hard to put her out of that. I would limit it to fifteen years.

6241. Did you hear what the former witness said with regard to giving certificates to stallions and registering foals?—Yes, sir.

6242. Do you agree with him at all?—I would allow no stallion in my country without paying a license. I would license them all. I think it would do away with all the weeds and bad ones.

6243. You would not allow a stallion to be in the country without he was licensed?—I would not. What is the use of allowing them in the country to breed inferior animals?

6244. What authority would you entrust with the duty of licensing those which you would have licenses for?—Oh, I would have a local committee that know

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them. It might not be a very pleasant thing for the local committee to do, but at the same time I think a local committee would know the bad ones better than a stranger. There is no use in letting a bad stallion go along through the country.

6245. But would not the local committee be perhaps more or less interested in the owners of the stallions?—They may, and if they do not give licenses to men they may make enemies for themselves. It is very hard to know, but I certainly would have a local committee and a veterinary surgeon.

6246. And as to the registration of foals, do you think that is practicable, or would it be any use?—I think it would be the very best thing to register them. I would put a half-crown or five shillings registry on them, and have a sire registered in each county. I would have them examined there when they were twelve months old, and I would see if they were sound or likely to go on well. I would have them examined at two years old and up to three years old, and any of them that were showing any unsoundness or anything of that sort I would scratch them out. It would be a guarantee to everyone as to the breeding of the animal; but some people do not attach much importance to the breeding.

6247. I was going to ask you are the dealers who buy your horses particular as to the pedigree of stock, the breed of them?—Some of them are; but I was selling a horse to a dealer at one time, I thought I would get more money by telling him how he was bred. He turned around, and said, "I did not ask his breeding; leave that to me. I can find a pedigree for that fellow if it suits me."

6248. In your opinion can the farmers in your district be trusted to select the most suitable sires for the mares they have got provided the sires are there?—Yes, they are very keen, some of them. But the popularity of the sire owner goes a long way with them, at least amongst the lower class—the small farmers and that sort.

6249. The popularity of the sire or the owner?—Oh, the popularity of the owner. If he gives credit, and if he treats his customers to a few glasses now and again, he will be very popular amongst a certain lot.

6250. Are there a sufficiency of sires in your county, enough of them?—Do you mean thoroughbred?

6251. Yes?—Yes, there are, but they belong to local people.

6252. Have the farmers to go a long distance to get to them?—No, in my district they have not—not perhaps more than ten miles.

6253. What is the general fee charged?—£2 and £3, and down I suppose to half a sovereign.

6254. Are there many horses bought for the cavalry remounts in your part of the country?—Not many, sir.

6255. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you keep your mares entirely for breeding—the brood mares you refer to?—I never work them.

6256. Keep them entirely for breeding?—Yes.

6257. You don't believe in feeding your foal well the first winter?—No.

6258. You have never tried that?—I never did. They go on well enough for me without trying that.

6259. Is yours very good land?—Oh, well it is rough land, but suitable land; it is good land, sound land—a good run on it you know.

6260. But you have never tried feeding the foals well the first winter to see how they would do in comparison with those you did not feed?—I tried one; he was delicate; he did'nt do well; he never grew.

6261. You knew he was delicate in the first instance?—Yes, I thought I would do better for him; he was the only foal I ever fed.

6262. I think you said you were in favour of a local committee; how would you select your local committee for the examination of sires?—Well, I would say that the chairman of our Waterford committee, Captain Maxwell, who is a first-rate judge, he would be a very good man, and let him associate three or four with himself.

6263. I am not talking of individuals. Would you leave it to the chairman of the county committee to select his committee?—Certainly, leave it to him.

6264. You would not give the breeders any voice in the selection?—Of course, I would take in two or three breeders, large farmers.

6265. As regards the farmers themselves, would you give them any voice in the selection of the committee—the ordinary farmers who breed the horses for the fairs—would you let them have a voice?—Of course I would.

6266. You would take their opinions?—I would of course, sir; they ought to be the best judges of what would suit themselves.

6267. Have you any experience of selling to foreign buyers?—I sold a few, sir.

6268. Did they generally ask you about the pedigrees?—Yes, latterly they have asked me. Not in the beginning. Latterly they have.

6269. You think it would be an advantage to be able to give true pedigrees for the foreign buyers?—Yes, I wrote it down for them and they took it.

6270. They attach importance to the pedigrees?—I think so, sir.

6271. Did you sell many harness horses?—No; I generally go for hunters.

6272. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any suggestions, Mr. Foott, that you would like to give the Commission as to how the industry of horse-breeding can be improved in your locality; anything that you consider could be done?—Try and encourage the farmers to keep their good mares, and I said to extend the period to fifteen years.

6273. You think as far as the sires are concerned?—You would have an opportunity of seeing the young stock of a mare if she comes up to fifteen.

6274. And you think that the sires should be licensed?—Oh, I think the sires should be licensed, and the bad ones done away with at any cost.

6275. Anything else you would like to say, Mr. Foote?—Except—I think I said it before—if we could get more money for the county than £100 a-year; it would be an encouragement to give more money to the owners of good mares. It would be an encouragement to them. I would do away with the valuation altogether—either that or raise it to £200. The man whose valuation is £200 a-year would be more likely to keep a good mare than the man whose valuation is only £50.

Mr. Thomas Corrigan.

Mr. THOMAS CORRIGAN, Maplestown, Rathvilly, Co. Carlow, examined.

6276. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County of Carlow?—Yes.

6277. Are you farming there?—Yes.

6278. And you breed horses yourself?—Yes.

6279. Have you done so for some time?—Well, I have been breeding on my own account for 15 or 16 years, and my father bred a good many horses.

6280. What class of horses do you try to produce?—A good many classes—hunters, working-horses, and harness horses.

6281. Do you breed any hunters?—Yes.

6282. What do you find pays you best to breed?—I think, taking a given number, that the strong heavy horses pays best.

6283. The strong heavy horses, what are they used for?—The agricultural horse.

6284. Are there many horses bred about you?—There are a good many.

6285. Mostly for agricultural purposes?—I don't think so. They are pretty mixed—hunters and harness-horses and a good deal of very low class.

6286. What kind of mares do you use yourself?—I have one three-part-bred mare and a couple of plain bred mares or cross-bred.

6287. Do you think the quality of the mares is as good as it used to be throughout your county?—I think not at all as good. I am certain of it.

6288. You think the farmers are selling their best mares out of the country altogether?—I do.

6289. What breed of stallions are generally used—thoroughbred?—Both thoroughbred horses and some draught horses.

6290. Draught horses?—Yes.

6291. What are they?—Clydesdale.

6292. Is there a Clydesdale sire standing near you?—Yes—within 10 miles; there is one in Carlow.

6293. Are there many of them in the county?—Not many.

6294. Any Hackneys?—No, sir.

6295. Have you bred from the Clydesdale any produce you have sold as hunters or harness horses?—No, sir, not as hunters or harness-horses; I don't think you can breed them that way.

6296. Have you bred from Irish draught horses at all?—No, sir; I bred some from the Cleveland horse with small well-bred mares, and I found them a very useful horse.

6297. Do you think the Cleveland and Clydesdales are suitable for your country?—I think the Cleveland would be a suitable cross with some of the small mares. I think he would be a more suitable horse than the Clydesdale.

6298. Do you know anything about the Hackney?—No, sir; nothing except what I heard talked about him. I don't know what a Hackney is.

6299. Is the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme in operation in your county?—Yes.

6230. How long has it been in operation?—I think somewhere about three years.

6231. Has it done any good do you think?—I think not much.

6232. Not had much effect?—I have not seen any.

6233. Are the horses produced in your part of the country as good as they used to be?—I think not at all.

6234. How do you account for their not being so good?—I think in a great measure from the good mares being sold out of the country, and people breeding from things that are not easy to sell.

6235. Do the prices keep up?—For the high class of hunters I think the prices are as good as ever; for any other class, I think they have gone down considerably.

6236. Have you bred from any half-bred stallions?—I have, from what are called half-bred stallions. I would not breed from them from choice.

6237. You mean you would prefer a thoroughbred?—Certainly, if I had a mare to suit him.

6238. Are there a sufficient number of thoroughbred stallions in your part of the country?—I think there is a very good number of very good horses in our part of the country.

6239. Are many horses in your district bought by the Government?—At Castledermot fair there are a good many bought sometimes.

6240. What do you think could be done to keep the best mares in the country?—I think by giving good prizes for the best brood mares it might have a tendency to keep them in the country; in a great many cases I think it is want of capital that makes the people sell their good mares; and how to remedy that I don't know.

6241. These good mares that so many of the witnesses complain of are leaving the country are they fetching bigger prices than they did twenty years ago?—No, I think not that class.

6242. I mean the good mares?—The really good high-class hunters would be worth as much.

6243. I mean the mares?—I think not.

6244. Where do they go to?—The tramway companies take a fairish number of them.

6245. In your opinion do you think the foreign governments are buying more of our good mares than they used to?—I don't know that; I could not say.

6246. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Would you approve of what is called the half-bred sire with a good deal of thoroughbred breeding if he had bone and action?—Certainly.

6247. What would you yourself use, a half-bred of that description or a Clydesdale or Cleveland?—It would depend on the class of mare; if I had bone enough I would rather use a horse with breeding; but if I had a light well-bred mare, I would rather cross her with a Cleveland.

6248. I am talking of the half-bred sire with plenty of bone and action, which would you send to?—I don't exactly understand.

6249. I mean the half-bred sire I am speaking of with a certain amount of thoroughbred crossing if he had bone, and was a strong and active horse, which would you send to—him or a Cleveland?—I would rather send to the half-bred horse.

6250. With regard to your mares, have you had many large mares that you bred hunters from?—No, not large enough; I find it easy to breed a twelve or twelve and a half stone horse, but not bigger; I can get blood enough, but not bone.

6251. The usual mare you have bred from is a small type?—Yes.

6252. Mr. WRENCH.—Your evidence is that it pays best to breed strong draught horses?—Yes; I think a given number taken all round, they leave you more profit than the other horses.

6253. Referring to other horses, you are chiefly referring to thoroughbreds?—Yes.

6254. Have you bred many harness horses?—Not many.

6255. Have you sold them at good prices?—Yes, some of them.

6256. Did you find it easy to get action?—No; it is not so easy to get good action.

6257. If you had good action would it be of any use to you?—Oh, certainly.

6258. You think it is a good thing?—It is the chief point with the harness horse.

6259. The class of horses you see in Castledermot fair, are they much worse than they used to be?—The greater part of them are decidedly worse.

6260. What is the average price they run up or down to?—In some of the last fairs I have seen three-year-olds sold at £10, and some of them as low as £8.

6261. Do you know how any of these horses were bred?—No.

6262. You saw three-year-olds sold at £8 and £10?—Yes.

6263. And Castledermot is considered the best fair in that district?—Yes.

6264. Are many troopers bought there?—There are, a good many.

6265. Are they bought direct from the breeders or by dealers?—By dealers generally.

6266. Do you know what prices the breeders get for them?—I don't know; they get very different prices.

6267. Did you see many sold?—Not personally.

6268. Then you say the mares have deteriorated—by that you mean that they have got weedy and smaller?—Yes, and mixed up, and bred every way.

6269. Do you think it would be a good thing that all horses should be registered?—Yes.

6270. So that it could be ascertained how they were bred?—Yes.

6271. You think the farmers would fall in with that idea and carry it out?—I do—I think they would.

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6272. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything else that you would like to say to the Commission?—I think in our district I would not confine them to one class of horse; it may suit some to breed from the thoroughbred, while others may be induced to breed from another sort of horse, and I think at the present time, with the class of fillies in our country—that is with the mares they have—if any horse were sent into the county, the Cleveland would be the best horse and most likely to improve the breed of horses. I don't say that would be the way to improve the breed of hunters, but it would be the way to improve the present mares.

Mr. Herbert Warren.

Mr. HERBERT WARREN, Garrendenny Castle, Queen's County, examined.

6273. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Carlow?—Queen's County, my lord, but I am intimately acquainted with the county Carlow.

6274. Have you a farm in the county of Carlow?—Yes.

6275. Mr. WRENCH.—Where abouts in Queen's county do you live?—The eastern portion between Kilkenny and Carlow.

6276. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Queen's county?—Yes.

6277 Which are you best acquainted with—Queen's county or Carlow?—Both, equally so.

6278. Did you hear the evidence of the last witness with respect to the part of Carlow that he is acquainted with?—Yes.

6279. Do you agree chiefly with what he said?—Fairly so; I believe the difficulty myself is that the thoroughbred we have had in the country has ruined the breed of horses.

6680. What is the matter with the thoroughbred horse?—At least 50 per cent. of the thoroughbreds will never get a weight-carrying hunter. A horse with about seven inches or eight inches of bone below the knee, and possibly able to carry 10 stone, will never get a hunter except off a Clydesdale mare.

6281. Do you breed horses yourself?—Yes, my lord.

6282. In both places?—In both places.

6283. What kind of mares do you breed from?—From all kinds; I like the mare with a cross or two of thoroughbred blood the best.

6284. And you breed for what?—I attempt to breed hunters; I have also used Clydesdale sires to well-bred mares, and they are an utter failure.

6285. They were a failure?—Yes, my lord.

6286. And as far as the hunter is concerned you found the thoroughbred the best?—Oh, undoubtedly; the failure in that instance is in the mares being too small.

6287. You think the mares have deteriorated?—I think they have.

6288. Not so good as they used to be?—I don't think they are.

6289. I gather from what you said you attribute that to the inferiority of the thoroughbred sire?—I think that is largely to blame—very much so. They are both unsound and small, and the occasional large one you see is not a success. I know several large thoroughbred horses have been unsound themselves, and have produced stock singularly unsound.

6290. Do you think the deterioration is due at all to the best mares being sold out of the country?—It is, undoubtedly; but I blame the sires just as much as selling the mares.

6291. Do you know about these foreign governments buying these mares more than they used to?—They don't come to the fairs for them; the occasional trooper purchased is purchased by the dealer.

6292. I mean that farmers are more inclined to sell good mares and breed from inferior ones than they used to be. I want to find out to what that tendency is due, whether it is that they are offered large prices or what?—They are not offered large prices for them; as a matter of fact a gelding of equal quality is worth more than the filly.

6293. You don't think the thoroughbred stallions in the parts of the country you are acquainted with are as good as they ought to be?—Undoubtedly not.

6294. What is your opinion of the half-bred stallion?—I think the half-bred stallion is very useful.

6295. Provided of course that he is sound and suitable?—Oh, undoubtedly.

6296. What is your opinion as to the Clydesdale or Cleveland or any other breed?—Is there not a great contrast between the Cleveland and Clydesdale?—My idea is that the Cleveland is a useful horse, and that the Clydesdale is hardly wanted, except in very heavy tillage land where they are required with the plough, in parts of Kilkenny and parts of Kildare.

6297. There are Clydesdale sires in your part of the country?—There are.

6298. Are there any Cleveland sires?—No.

6299. Any Hackney sires?—No, not serving.

6300. Have you any experience of Hackneys?—Yes.

6301. Where did you gain that?—In this country triflingly, and in America principally.

6302. Have you ever bred from the Hackney sire?—I have.

6303. And with what results?—Well, I lay great stress on the choice of any sire—not in the breed but in the choice of the individual, thoroughbred or Hackney; I believe there are very charming horses in the Hackney Book, and I believe there are equally bad ones; I think the Hackney with a cross or two of thoroughbred is a most useful animal.

6304. As a stallion?—Yes, as a stallion; that is to say a stallion out of a thoroughbred mare by a pure-bred Hackney. Is it not a fact that thoroughbred horses can be entered in the Hackney Book, and are, as a matter of fact; and also that horses of two or three crosses of thoroughbred blood are eligible to be entered?

6305. I only wanted to find out what you mean You think a stallion would be useful crossed between a thoroughbred and a Hackney?—Yes, my lord.

6306. Have you seen such stallions?—I have.

6307. And their produce?—And their produce.

6308. Where—in your own part of the country?—In America.

6309. And you approve of them?—I do, my lord. I think they are a useful all round animal, and I think a mare of that breeding would be a valuable animal crossed with a thoroughbred sire—her produce, I mean.

6310. Then you, yourself—you have no objection to the introduction of Hackney blood into your part of the country?—None, if he was of right type. Some of them are very short and corky, and with short pasterns. They are, undoubtedly, bad animals; some, I remarked, are very short from their hip to their tail.

6311. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation in your district?—For years.

6312. Has it done any good?—It has done harm.

6313. In what way?—It has put a thoroughbred sire before the small farmer, which is a ruination, considering the mares he has, and that is the reason you hear of three and four-year-olds being sold for £8, £10, and £20. If they had a proper sire they would be worth £30 and upwards, but the miserable thoroughbred sires which have been in the country, and which have been let cheap to the small farmer, has ruined him; he has had the use of a horse with a long pedigree for £1, and it has done harm.

6314 What class do you think he ought to go to?—

A medium horse, and I would leave it to the Commission—something between a draught horse and a thoroughbred. The Clydesdale is no use for that animal; she doesn't breed anything large enough. I would suggest a Cleveland or a good Hackney.

6315. There is no Hackney anywhere near?—No, my lord.

6316. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Is the soil generally of a light nature about you?—Well, perhaps, I should say yes.

6317. Then the heavy horse is not required?—Not required.

6318. You mentioned about Hackneys; do you consider the Hackney a stout breed of horse?—I do.

6319. Good staying power—I am talking of his staying power; that is what I mean by stout?—He cannot stay as long as a thoroughbred horse, but I don't know that is a point that will touch the smaller farmer, that wants to sell what he grows. He would like to produce an animal that would produce the most money.

6320. Would you advocate using a stallion that has not very stout staying powers?—But the poor man, I would allow him to use the horse the produce of which would make the most money.

6321. Do you think that produce would go on bringing him in money or be likely to fall away in second crosses?—I think the cross of this Irish blood with the thoroughbred would do away with all the weakness of the Hackney.

6322. Supposing there was a stallion of the half-bred stamp you have mentioned out of the old Irish mare with two or three crosses of thorough breeding, if he had bone and substance and action, would you consider him a good sort of horse?—Yes, better than the Hackney.

6323. And you think it would be likely to do good to the smaller farmer if he had a horse of that description?—I do.

6324. In preference to any heavy horse of any breed at all?—Well, mares vary so much; but on the abstract I would say yes.

6325. Do you consider the bone of the Cleveland as hard as the thoroughbred?—It is larger, but not so hard.

6326. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you ever seen a half-bred horse, such as you speak of, with as good action as the Hackney?—Never.

6327. Do you think that class of sire would be likely to beget as good action?—The Hackney will get the best action.

6328. Do you know at all how the Yorkshire Hackneys are largely bred?—No, sir; I do not.

6329. You know that a good many have a thoroughbred strain in them?—I do.

6330. You know that in Yorkshire they used the thoroughbred horse very largely in producing Hackneys?—I have heard so.

6331. But you don't know out of what class of mares they are bred?—I do not.

6332. Have you seen the result of the cross of the Hackney with the country-bred animals in America?—I have.

6333. And what class of animals do they produce?—A useful all round animal with action that would be decidedly useful and a seller.

6334. Were the mares very angular and uneven in shape?—No, they were not.

6335. What were they like?—Not a wild mare by any means, or pony—a mare of very considerable size. The State I refer to had mares of considerable size, but I could not say what breed they were.

6336. Were they weedy?—Not weedy.

6337. Was the production of the Hackney better than the dams?—The production was better, but the Hackney was a good one with a couple of crosses of thoroughbred blood—a hunting looking horse.

6338. You are very much against the Clydesdale blood?—Altogether; I think it has done harm in Ireland.

6339. And you don't think it is required on the farms in your district?—No.

6340. A lighter horse would do as well?—Yes.

6341. Have you had any success in breeding hunters?—Yes, considerable.

6342. What mares did you breed from?—Half-bred mares, and what you might call common mares. I have a couple of trammers.

6343. You don't know how they were bred?—I know nothing about them.

6344. I think you said you had seen a good many bad as well as good Hackneys?—I have.

6345. And have you seen as many bad thoroughbreds as good?—I have—more.

6346. So that it is not a peculiarity of any breed that there should be a good many bad animals in it?—It seems to be rather the reverse.

6347. And you think that giving prominence to the thoroughbred over any other sire actually did an injury to the farmers of your district?—I should classify the animal you refer to.

6348. I understood you to say that your objection to the Royal Dublin Society's scheme is that they only subsidise thoroughbreds, that there are no suitable thoroughbreds in your district, and that they had encouraged the farmers to go to the thoroughbreds in preference to the horse that would suit them?—Quite so, but the farmers are not judges.

6349. The farmers are not judges?—No.

6350. You think the horse ought to be selected for them?—Yes, without telling them so.

6351. You heard a good deal about registration?—Yes.

6352. Do you think it practicable that every horse and mare should be registered?—There might be a difficulty with the mares; I would license all sires.

6353. Would you do that with a local committee or central body?—By a central body; I would not trust a local committee very much.

6354. You think the influences are too great?—Not that; but half the men you meet breeding horses know nothing about it.

6355. You would prefer a committee of experts?—Yes.

6356. You think it is practicable to register horses as suggested?—I think it could be very easily managed.

6357. Do you think it would put up the price of horses?—I don't know that it would.

6358. Are they very particular about pedigrees in America?—Yes, very.

6359. And you can generally ascertain there how the horses are bred?—Yes, you can.

6360. And when they are put up for auction their pedigrees given are generally correct?—Yes.

6361. CHAIRMAN.—What part of America are you acquainted with?—The North Western States—Iowa, Minnesota, Dakota, Nebraska.

6362. And you spent a good deal of time there?—Yes, three years.

6363. Were you farming?—Yes.

6364. Did you breed horses there yourself?—Yes.

6365. What do they try to breed in those States?—They only aim at breeding the utility animal to do all kinds of work.

6366. For their own purposes?—Yes, for their own purposes.

6367. It is an enormous district, if you can speak of it as one—all these States and Territories—but what kind of sires are there there?—Portion of these States are agricultural—not like Montana, wild cattle countries—they are agricultural and require horses.

6368. What kind of sires?—Several kinds—Clydesdales, Hackneys, Shire, Suffolk Punch, American trotters, and thoroughbreds, and French and German.

6369. Can you tell us at all which answered best out of all that list?—In America?

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6370. Yes, those parts you are acquainted with?—It is very difficult to say; I liked the American trotter with lots of thoroughbred blood better than any sire there.

6371. These Hackneys you spoke of had got a strong cross of thoroughbred blood?—Yes.

6372. What were they used for?—They were used for every purpose; but they were fine driving horses with great power; none of the animals I refer to were used for the saddle.

6373. I suppose the saddle horse is not so much used in those parts?—No, the pony is used.

6374. I think you said you thought the sire he should use ought to be selected for the farmer?—I do.

6375. Do you think the farmer would approve of that?—What I meant by that was to place the desirable kind of sire in the country.

6376. And for the hunters that you said you had been so successful in breeding, what sires did you use?—They were all by thoroughbred horses; I think that crossing a thoroughbred on a thoroughbred too often is a mistake; if you want to breed a horse to carry some weight you will have to begin with a mare of great strength as a rule, and she will be a commoner mare than pedigrees will give you to believe. I might say that I bred one specially grand colt, and his grand dam was by a Norfolk trotter.

6377. His grand dam?—Yes; there was breeding before the Norfolk blood was introduced, and then there were two crosses of thoroughbred. That horse when four year old sold for £400 in England.

6378. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Did you ever hunt him?—He was just ridden quietly about the premises when a dealer came and took him.

6379. He went to England as a hunter?—Yes; he was bought by Hames.

6380. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any suggestion to make as to what practically could be done to improve the breed of horses in your part of the country?—I have heard a great many suggestions, and I think Major Connellon, the first witness, made some useful suggestions. It means a lot of trouble and expense in choosing the men to do it. A very simple thing to do would be to register the sires and not touch the mares. What the small farmer wants is the mare. You cannot buy mares and give them to him, consequently you want to give him a sire between a thoroughbred and a Clydesdale that will produce him a mare that will be useful with a thoroughbred cross.

6381. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You don't mean a cross of the thoroughbred and Cleveland?—No; I mean a distinct animal.

6382. Did you not say you approved of the half-bred horse out of the Irish mare stamp by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes; I do. The great thing that is wanted is bone and power to make money.

6383. Mr. WRENCH.—You would grade up the mares by crossing the present mares with a stronger class of stallions?—Yes; exactly.

6384. And when graded up you would use the thoroughbred?—Yes.

6385. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Mr. Foott suggested that the produce of the registered stallions and mares should be examined as yearlings, as two-year-olds, and as three-year-olds, and then if unsound should be scratched out?—I would leave that altogether to the buyer, and leave him to find out the unsoundness.

6386. You would not register them?—I would as foals.

6387. Mr. WRENCH.—You would register them as to pedigree, but you would register the sires as to soundness?—And the mares, too. If you are going to register a foal, I would register his dam.

6388. You would register the foals as to breeding, but would register the stallions as to soundness?—Undoubtedly. I would allow no unsound horses in the country. Public opinion will support the Royal Dublin Society in extinguishing unsound horses.

6389. CHAIRMAN.—Would you prefer registration to license?—I would license as well; no one will object except the owner who had an unsound one.

6390. Lord RATHDONNELL.—In the case of a filly—you would register that filly as a foal. What would you do at two-year-old and three-year-old if she was to remain in the country?—Offer a prize or give the man some subsidy to keep her if sound.

6391. I thought you would not examine her?—I would examine the dam before I registered her, and then the produce which would probably be sound.

6392. You would have to examine it too?—Yes.

6393. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any other suggestion to make?—I don't think so, my lord, except that I would have to differ from the opinion of one of the Queen's County witnesses who said the mares are good enough.

6394. When was that?—A few days since—I don't like to mention names; he said he considered the sires and mares good enough, and to improve the price, I think that—that is putting the cart before the horse, because if you improve the animal you get the price—I would give no stallion owner a subsidy; if he has got a good sire he will make a fortune, and get enough mares and too many. I would give no stallion owner a copper.

6395. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You would license him?—I would prevent the unsound sire in the county, and there will be no ill-will or objection to that; the public would like to have the unsound stallions extinguished.

6395A. CHAIRMAN.—But what about the owners of unsound animals?—

6396. Mr. WRENCH.—They would be a small minority?—Yes; you see the gelding that has been a sire sold in the fairs, so I think the compensation you would have to give a man for doing away with his sire, altering him to a gelding, would be trifling; we often hear of unsound stallions and unsound mares producing sound stock, but I think it is well to keep clear of them, though indeed I am bound to say that I know of a man boasting of a mare, suffering from a large ring-bone, producing seven foals, all of which were perfectly free from it, and sold at five years old at over £100 each.

6397. You don't know how they ended their career?—No.

6398. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Is it not possible for ring-bone to come from accident?—Possibly it did come from accident.

Mr. RICHARD O'MALLEY, Woodlawn, Santry, examined.

Mr. Richard O'Malley

6399. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Woodlawn, near Santry, co. Dublin?—Yes, my lord.

6400. Are you interested in horse-breeding?—Yes.

6401. What kind of horses do you generally breed?—Chiefly Clydesdales and Shires; some harness and some hunters I did breed some years ago—not quite so many latterly. I chiefly go now for Clydesdales and Shires.

6402. Why have you changed?—I found that the Clydesdale pays me much better and the Shire. Being so near Dublin I have a much better market for them, because I can sell them to distillers, brewers, and carriers. I can work those horses before they come up to four or five years old, when I dispose of them in the city, on my own farm from two and a half years old. I generally yoke two of them at a

time, and then each of those two and a half year olds only does half a day's work, and that brings them into a good working condition afterwards for me.

6403. What kind of mares do you breed from?—Clydesdale and Shire mares.

6404. And what kind of stallion?—I prefer the Clydesdale stallion to the Shire; I think he is a better horse, he has better bones and firmer, he goes better; with the Shire horse, to my mind, his forepart went well away, but his hind part was swaying after him. I don't like a horse of that stamp if he does not go straight, and I think they are a hardier and better horse, with flat and cleaner bones.

6405. Then may we take it that you have practically given up breeding hunters?—Practically given up breeding hunters for the last five or six years.

6406. Do you breed from two-year old fillies?—No; I did in some cases and I did not approve of it; I think it weakened the constitution of the two-year old by breeding at that young age, that what went to mature the dam was taken away by the foal, and I further proved in some cases that I thought the mare was very much liable afterwards to weak bowels, and that they were not quite as strong after breeding; it might be, perhaps, imagination, but I have passed that remark on some of them, that I could not keep them as strong that way without hard dry feeding as those that I never bred from as two-year olds.

6407. You bred from them at three-year old?—I bred from a three-year old, but I find that it is somewhat more difficult to get the three-year old in foal than to get a four-year old or a two-year old. I could not say what the cause is though.

6408. Are there any thoroughbred stallions about you?—There are, under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme; there are some in Cloghran, more in Swords, some about Balrothery, and more about my own neighbourhood.

6409. Any half-bred stallions?—There may be some, but I do not approve at all of the half-bred stallion, I would like them pure of any breed. I find, from seeing the result of horse-breeding by half-bred stallions, that the crosses were inclined to run curby and to form the hock in a round form and not a proper cap on the hock.

6410. When you bred hunters what stallions did you use?—Thoroughbred stallions and a Clydesdale mare. I have bred a Clydesdale horse to a thoroughbred mare that I was made a present of by Mr. Wardell, the owner of Ben Battle, and I gave my Clydesdale horse to that mare, and at three-year old I sold a colt by it for £125, a longtail. I then followed the next year, and it bred a mare, and I think it was £60 I got for her; she had a slight curb at three-year old.

6411. As to the general quality of the horses in your district, do you think they are improving?—I think they are about the same for the last twenty years—that is, in agricultural horses.

6412. In the hunting horses?—In the hunting horses; any hunters I see around me I think they are equally good as they were years ago; you will get them at all times bad, sometimes you will get a mare that may breed a good foal or two, and then she may have not as good a one; she may breed a soft horse or a very hardy horse one year, and the contrary the next year.

6413. Have you anything to say about the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—I think it is working very well all over the country; the only thing that I have got to say is that we have not got money enough in the Royal Dublin Society; there is a grant of £5,000, and I think that perhaps the public labour under the idea that we are spending that all on the horses; that is not the case, we only give £3,500 to horses, and £1,500 to bulls and other animals; but I think that if we had double the amount of money at our command now that we have, we could do far more good; and I am of opinion, perhaps I am not correct, that no other body of men could do as much good as the Royal Dublin Society has done, and will do, because the gentlemen there give their time free, and the County Committees assist them, so that every shilling that comes into our hands seems to be well laid out; we cannot please everyone with sires and mares and everything.

6414. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Did you follow up the young horses you bred and sold of the hunting class, that were out of the Clydesdale mares by the thoroughbred horse?—I bred about, I think, four or five of them.

6415. Did you ever follow them up in their after career?—No, I did not; but I can give you this as history:—Mr. Donnelly, of Cabra, who owned a thoroughbred mare and my horse Orphan served that mare, and he sold the produce of that mare at five-year-old for 400 guineas got by a Clydesdale—that I can prove. And I have sold a long tail at a sum that I am after naming by a Clydesdale, but this Clydesdale horse, my lord, never was beaten, because he won the Royal Dublin Society's Cup right out; he had beautiful shoulders, and quarters and middle, and everything to make him perfect; he won the Cork Cup, and he won the Belfast Cup; and when he was only two years' old I refused 1,000 guineas for him in the Belfast Show from a Yorkshire man, and his service with me for sixteen years was three guineas to farmers, and five guineas to gentlemen, and every year on an average for at least twelve or fourteen years I got served over 100 mares by him.

6416. He was a Clydesdale?—He was a Clydesdale, and from that horse I sold two colts to Messrs. Guinness, and those have won our Royal Dublin Society's Cup out within the last eight years. And when they brought all the horses over from Scotland, where they have 150, they could not pick two as good horses as I reared and sold to them.

6417. Mr. WRENCH.—You have had a good deal to say as to the working of the schemes of the Royal Dublin Society for a good many years?—I have.

6418. And do you know now that the Royal Dublin Society only subsidise the thoroughbred horse or encourage the thoroughbred horse on their register?—That is all.

6419. Would you be in favour of encouraging any other breed of horse?—Oh, certainly.

6420. What horses?—I would encourage the Clydesdale and the Shire horse, and I would encourage the Hackney horse I think; he is a perfect animal.

6421. And that he would be very serviceable in different parts of Ireland far more than any other horse that can be introduced?—He has good shoulders, good middle piece, beautiful loins and quarters, and well set tail, long hocks and beautiful ankles; in my opinion he is a model of a horse, and in far remote places, if a poor man has a small mare, I believe the introduction of the Hackney would be a great service, inasmuch as that to a small farmer he would produce an animal from his mare that could work light work on his farm after the autumn time of the year, do light ploughing the same as I do with my Clydesdales and Shires at two and a half years old; he would be a paying sire more or less for that small farmer, because he would not be eating the head off himself. If he was a hunter, the farmer could not make use of that hunter sooner than four or coming up to five year old; and what small farmer can very well afford to feed an idle horse from four to five years old, or from three to five years old? But where that horse is got by a Hackney or any other horse you can utilise him on a small farm; I think that is where they come in very serviceable.

6422. Which do you think pays the best to breed, hunters or harness horses, in your experience?—In the County Dublin in my district a draft horse will pay the best.

6423. Have you any experience of breeding harness horses?—I have.

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6424. Have you found it difficult to sell them or easy?—If I have the right style of a horse, a good stepper, and a nice mover, he will certainly be bought up at once. In my experience of fairs and places—I read some reports here, from time to time reading them on the papers—that Hackney horses are soft. Well that may be the case, but if I meet a horse in a fair when I go into it, and he is a good style of a horse, a good stepper and goer, I never wait to ask a man what he is got by; I buy him, because if I go away another slips in and buys him.

6425. You have heard it suggested here that all horses should be registered; would you be in favour of that?—I would be in favour of that very much; I would go further, I would allow no unsound horses to serve; I would castrate those horses or put a heavy fine on the man who owned them, for if they are allowed to remain without some heavy punishment on the owner of the horse the small farmer will go to these horses and get a foal, and the produce of that service, perhaps, at three or four year old is an unsound horse and the farmer gets nothing for him; and as long as those unsound stallions are allowed to roam the country I don't think you will ever have horses right. But I would like the Commission to understand that I don't want to pollute the hunter with the Hackney or with any other horse, I want to go for a general all-round horse that is most profitable to every part of the country, and to assist, as we want to do—that is, the Royal Dublin Society—the smaller farmers, for I hold the larger ones can mind themselves.

6426. You think the smaller farmers are the people that need most assistance?—I believe so.

6427. And you would be in favour then of encouraging pure-bred stallions of any breed in preference to the half-bred?—In preference to the half-bred. You may get from a half-bred a good horse with power and go in him, but they are inclined in their hocks to run a little curby, with a bad formed cap to the hock, which is very much against the horse. I would be in favour I think of using the Cleveland bay—it would be a splendid thing to put the Cleveland bay to the Hackney mare. You would bring him down, for he is very tall—some of them want nearly a fire-escape to go up on them. I think if they were thickened down with the Hackney they would breed an excellent class of horse.

6428. Have you any suggestions to make as to encouraging people to keep their best mares?—I have heard it frequently said, over and over, give them a prize; but I do not agree with that, because, supposing in our scheme under the Royal Dublin Society we awarded them a prize, and they won it this year and may win it next year—supposing we give them £5 or £10 as some of the witnesses suggested—I think if any of those men who have good mares got the prize this year and maybe were offered £20 or £30 more than they might expect in consequence of their getting it, no prize money would prevent them selling their mares—they will not keep them.

6429. Then have you any suggestion to make as to how better mares could be kept in the country?—I really could not say; I believe no matter what prize you offer that, as I have already said, they will not keep them if tempted with money, except a man has a great taste for breeding and will stick to a mare as long as she throws her stock right.

6430. Do you know whether many of the mares that belong to the Tramway Company find their way into farmers' hands as brood mares?—Several of them do; I never bought any.

6431. Is it the custom among a good many of the smaller farmers to buy them?—A great custom.

6432. So that a great many of the brood mares round Dublin come from the tramways?—A great number.

6433. You don't know how these tramway horses are bred?—I don't know anything about them, they must be very much crossed,—I see some nice mares.

6434. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any experience yourself of breeding from Hackney sires?—None; my brothers have bred from Mr. Tommy Power's horse, and he has a perfect beauty in training now.

6435. You have no experience yourself as to whether the Hackney is soft or not?—I have not, my lord; but as I have already said, even with my Clydesdales and other dams I have bred hardy good foals, and I have got soft cattle in the same way from the same dams.

6436. I think you said that even if the Hackney was soft, that as far as the sale price or value of the produce was concerned that would not signify?—I don't know did I say that.

6437. It was something to that effect. I want to know what you meant by that; you rather gave me to understand that you did not think it a material consideration whether the produce was or was not soft as long as it fetched a good price?—With the greatest respect, my lord, I did not mean that. It has been said that the Hackneys are very soft; I am not able to say whether they are or are not; but from the make and appearance and shape it appears to me that they are a perfect made animal, that they ought not to be soft; but I have bred very hardy Clydesdales from a mare, and I have bred from the same mare and by the same horse, brothers and sisters, and some of them were soft and bad—that is what I mean, my lord.

6438. I wanted to know what your opinion on that was. It amounts to this—you might produce a very saleable horse that would fetch a good price, but if it turned out to be soft, although that would not affect you immediately, I presume, in your opinion, it would not be a wise thing to encourage?—Are you referring, my lord, to the Hackney?

6439. I was referring to the Hackney?—If it turned out to be soft of course you could utilise it somehow on the farm or in harness work driving.

(*Shorthand writer, by direction of the Chairman, reads Question* 6424).

6440. That gave me the impression it did not signify whether it turned out soft or not?—If I see the style of horse before me that will suit my market I buy him at once.

6441. And if it turned out to be soft do you think you would buy again with equal confidence?—I would not go to the same place perhaps again.

6442. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I notice in giving your evidence you have used the word "we" in reference to the Royal Dublin Society several times—I would like to ask you whether you are speaking on behalf of the Royal Dublin Society or on your own?—On my own.

6443. Mr. WRENCH.—Can you tell me at all where the supposed soft blood in the Hackneys comes in?—I could not tell, because he is a perfect made animal, as I have already said, and I don't think he can be as soft as some represent him.

6444. Do you know how Yorkshire Hackneys are bred?—I do; there is a good deal of thoroughbred blood in them. I was over at last York Show, and saw there some of the most beautiful horses I could look at.

6445. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you think they have very good strong second thighs as a rule?—They have plenty of them, and good hocks and good gaskins, and splendid packed ribs and beautiful quarters, and well-set tail. I think they are a perfect model of a horse, and if I was going to breed a harness horse to-morrow it is from a Hackney I would breed.

6446. Supposing there was a good deal of money spent in this country by dealers in harness horses, such as Wimbush and East, if they expressed a decided opinion against the Hackney horse, would you still think it advisable to use him?—I still adhere to my own opinion, because during my time for the last thirty years I have taken over 200 first prizes at shows all over Ireland, and more than that in second

prizes, and I never consulted any one how I should mate my mare to my horse. If there is a bad place in my mare or a weak spot I watch that in the horse, and that is what I generally go for.

6447. You would not be afraid of losing their money supposing the Hackney stallion was used when they had expressed an opinion so strongly against his use, for it is in evidence already that they have?—It would not influence me at all, not until I had proved it myself.

6448. I mean you would not have any fear of losing their money?—I don't know for that.

6449. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know, as a matter of fact, that the trade of Messrs. East and Messrs. Wimbush, and these big dealers who object to Hackneys for their big class of horses, is a mere bagatelle as compared with the general trade of the country?—I would say so. I don't know anything about these gentlemen, but I think there is room for every breed of horses.

6450. If you go to an ordinary fair in the country do you see many high-class carriage horses in the fair?—One about for every fifty we see here in this city of Dublin—the remains of old thoroughbreds and weeds turned into traps and cars—and they not able to raise themselves, only kicking the stones out of the streets. They have no style, or elegance, or substance.

6451. Do you know that there is a good demand in Dublin for harness horses with action?—Quite so. If I have many harness horses or waggon horses I can sell them whenever I have them. I have always orders for harness horses or waggon horses, or any horses I have to sell.

6452. Lord RATHDONNELL.—The chief horses you have bred though have been heavy?—Clydesdales and Shires, and hunters and harness horses.

6453. Yes, but your hunters were bred from a Clydesdale and a thoroughbred horse?—Quite so; a clean shouldered good thoroughbred mare, and I had some beautiful fillies from her.

6454. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything you would like to say to the Commission, Mr. O'Malley?—I don't think I have anything more to say, only that I, some years ago, tried close breeding—in and in breeding—the result of that was in ten mares I tried I had only one good result.

6455. In and in breeding of what?—Of horses—Clydesdales—they had all malformations over their bodies, their backs not right, their hocks not right, their faces not right, so I stopped it.

Mr. R. B. BEGLEY, Claremorris, examined.

6456. CHAIRMAN—You live near Claremorris, in Mayo?—Yes.

6457. What is the nature of the district in which you reside?—It is a congested district for the most part—more than half of the Claremorris Union is congested.

6458. Do you breed horses yourself at all?—Yes.

6459. Do many of the farmers near you breed horses?—Yes.

6460. What kind of horses do they breed?—Harness horses and horses for pulling heavy loads, cart horses, and they breed cobs and small ponies.

6461. Where do they sell them?—At the fair of Claremorris, and when they have good ones they take them to the fair of Ballinasloe and dispose of them there; sometimes dealers come into the district and buy them up.

6462. Are the holdings small about you?—In the congested division itself the holdings are all small.

6463. Do you know anything of the Congested Districts Board's stallions?—I don't know anything about the Congested Districts Board's stallions. I know a good deal about the Hackneys; I don't know about the Hackneys that the Congested Districts Board have sent out, but I know about the Hackneys that have been in the district before that; there have been some Hackneys in Mount Partry belonging to Mitchell Brothers.

6464. What are the stallions generally in the district?—Half-bred stallions and some thoroughbred.

6465. And Hackneys?—And Hackneys; the only party who keeps Hackneys in the neighbourhood are the Mitchell Brothers.

6466. What do you prefer yourself?—I prefer for that district—a congested district—a half-bred hunter stallion with strong bone, plenty of muscle, measuring from 15-3 to 16 hands.

6467. You think that he is likely to produce as saleable a carriage or harness horse as the Hackney?—Yes, for the class of mares we have in that district.

6468. What kind of mares are they, do you know?—They are a light class of mare, and the Hackney with them I fancy would not produce a horse big enough, tall enough.

6469. How do the people about you treat their young stock—do they take sufficient care of them, do they house them?—They house them in the winter season, and take fairly good care of them.

6470. Feed them?—Feed them fairly well.

6471. At what age are they generally sold?—Sold at three-year-old, at four-year-old, and at two-year-old, and they sell them as foals.

6472. Are the prices as good as they used to be?—No, the prices are down considerably.

6473. For all kinds?—For nearly all classes of horses in that district.

6474. Are the farmers in your district inclined to sell their best mares and breed from their inferior ones?—Well, no; they are inclined to keep their good mares if they can, but sometimes they have an inferior class of foal produced and they have to dispose of the mare and keep the foal when they want to realise and get some money out of them.

6475. And you think your district is sufficiently provided with suitable stallions?—Yes, I think there could be more stallions sent into the district; the half-bred hunter stallions that are in the district are private property, and the people have to pay so much for the hire of these.

6476. What do you mean by a half-bred hunter?—One that is not a thoroughbred.

6477. When you say the half-bred is a suitable horse, do you mean the half-bred with a considerable strain of thoroughbred?—Yes.

6478. Do you think anything ought to be done in the way of licensing or registering stallions?—I consider it would be a very good thing to register all stallions of every class, and the foals in particular, and at the time of registering I would consider it a very good thing to give certificates to the owners of the foals, certificates of the registration, so that they might pass them over to purchasers later on, and it would be a guarantee that the foals were of the class they described.

6479. Is there a distinct breed of ponies in your district?—Well, there is a goodish pony—you could hardly call it a distinct pony.

6480. How has that been produced do you know?—Out of the old Irish pony, the mountainy pony, and the hunter; there is a good pony sometimes produced out of the mountainy pony with the thoroughbred.

6481. What are these ponies used for?—They are used in harness, and for different purposes, trapping.

6482. Is there any sale for them out of the country?—Oh, there is.

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6483. Mr. WRENCH.—Have the mares run down very much in your district within the last few years?—Yes, they have; they have deteriorated considerably.

6484. From what causes do you think?—Well, I believe it is principally from the fact that the thoroughbred horses sent into the district by the Royal Dublin Society were too light, and did not mate properly with mares we had in the district, and produced a weedy class of mares.

6485. Do you think they want some stronger cross introduced to build them up?—Yes, they want a half-bred sire of the description I gave before, something like 16 hands high, with plenty of bones and muscle, and a dash of breeding in him.

6486. When you are speaking of the half-bred sire, what particular district do you refer to?—I refer to the district around Claremorris, the low lands where the tenant farmers are fairly wealthy and able to live comfortably.

6487. And what class of sire would you recommend for the poorer districts nearer the mountains?—The Hackney.

6488. Do you think the Hackney is the best sire for that district?—I do; I have had a good deal of experience of the Hackney in that way myself, I have bred from him for the last 10 years.

6489. With what result?—I have got a small pony from an ordinary mountainy pony by a Hackney belonging to the Mitchells of Tourmakeady and Mountpartry, called Star of the West—she could make an English mile in three minutes.

6490. And keep it up?—Yes, I drove her 56 Irish miles in one day. I have repeatedly driven her 12 Irish miles in an hour and ten minutes, and I won two prizes with her for action in harness at the Hollymount Horse Show. I have hunted her with ten stone on her back along with the South Mayo hounds, and she performed well across country.

6491. And could keep up and stay?—And stay.

6492. CHAIRMAN.—How was she bred?—Out of a mountainy pony by Star of the West, a pure-bred Hackney.

6493. Lord RATHDONNELL.—How was he bred?—I cannot tell the breeding further than that he was brought over by the Mitchells of Tourmakeady.

6494. Mr. WRENCH.—From Yorkshire?—From England.

6495. But they have had Hackneys in that district for some years?—Yes; I have got ponies by Hackneys that they had before Star of the West, and they were equally good, but not so good as this one by Star of the West.

6496. You think Star of the West was the best sire?—I do; I have known The Willow, a horse bred by Mr. Vahy, v.s., Ballinrobe, took the champion wall jump in all the shows.

6497. He was by Star of the West?—Yes.

6498. He took the prize in Hollymount?—Yes, and in Roscommon and Ballinasloe, and the all-round prize in Castlerea; I have hunted alongside him and he carrying thirteen stone; hunted the whole season, and saw him finish up in the evening fresh and hearty.

6499. And he was got by Star of the West, too?—Yes.

6500. Have you known many good animals got by Star of the West in that district?—Yes, I have four others myself got by Star of the West; one I hunted with the South Mayo hounds, carrying twelve stone, sometimes thirteen stone, and she could jump anything. I have oftentimes put her across a five-foot wall.

6501. Then your experience of animals bred by Hackneys is not that they are soft?—No; on the contrary I believe there is no beating them for durability.

6502. Are they sound, do their stock seem sound?—Perfectly sound.

6503. And easily reared?—Very easily reared; as easily reared as a donkey.

6504. Is horse-breeding a considerable industry among the people there?—It is.

6505. Both in the lowlands you speak of and in the mountain districts?—Yes.

6506. Then you don't think that any suggestion to prevent those people breeding horses, or not to encourage them to breed horses, would be practicable?—I don't think so; I think it would be very injurious to them.

6507. You think they must go on breeding?—I believe it.

6508. And do they use many of their animals themselves early on the farms?—They break them in at two years old, and work them along then; sometimes they sell them according as men come for them.

6509. What are the chief fairs about there?—Claremorris, Ballina, Castlebar, Swinford, Ballyhaunis, Ballinrobe, and Tuam.

6510. And I think you said you would advocate a register for horses and give certificates to the breeder?—Yes.

6511. Have you thought at all how you would get that carried out; you have heard it suggested that the system should be put in operation through the Petty Sessions Clerk—do you think that would be a practical way of doing it?—I would much prefer to see it handed over to the authorities, the police of the district.

6512. Can you tell me at all about the opinions of the people in your district of the class of sire they would like?—They are all of opinion that the half-bred hunter sire I have described already is the class they want about Claremorris.

6513. You don't know the opinion of the people in the poorer districts?—I don't know the opinion of the people in the other districts; but I know what class of pony can be produced by the Hackney horse and the mountain pony.

6514. CHAIRMAN.—When you speak of the experience you have had of Hackneys do you mean the experience you have had of this particular horse, Star of the West?—Yes.

6515. How long has he been in the country?—He has gone out of the country about two years.

6516. How long was he in the country?—About five years; they change their horses very often.

6517. Who do?—The Mitchells, the owners of the horse.

6518. Do you know where he went to?—They took him back to England.

6519. What has replaced him?—There is another Hackney, but I don't know his name.

6520. You don't know why they took him away?—They wanted to bring other blood into the district; they usually get all the good mountainy ponies served by this sire, and they buy up the produce at remunerative prices, all the foals produced, and ship them away to England.

6521. Yes; but I wanted to know if you could tell us at all if you have got any idea why if this horse was so successful and so much liked he was taken away?—I cannot say. I suppose the Mitchells could tell that. He was private property, and they could do with them as they chose.

6522. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know the name of the horse that was there before "Star of the West"?—"A la mode."

6523. And do you know that the present horse is "Lord Rattler"?—That is his name.

6524. And have not the Messrs. Mitchell a good number of Hackney mares of their own standing at Tourmakeady?—Yes.

6525. They have a stud of their own that they breed with the horses they have from time to time?—Yes, and they also buy all the foals in the district.

6526. Before Mr. Mitchell began Hackney breeding do you know was he engaged in other horse breeding there?—I cannot say. He is not many years in the West.

6526. But he buys up a good number of fillies bred by the country people from his own horse?—He buys nearly all, and hardly gives the people a chance.

9527. At long prices?—At prices that pay themselves.

6528. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What is he? Is he a horse dealer?—I don't know, really. He has a shooting lodge at Tourmakeady.

6529. CHAIRMAN.—What does he do with them?—Takes them over to England.

6530. Lord RATHDONNELL.—All of them?—Yes.

6531. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know what fee they charge for "Star of the West?—£2, I think, to an outsider.

6532. Mr. WRENCH.—And less to his own tenants?—Very little to his own tenants—a few shillings.

6533. CHAIRMAN.—You said just now that you have a high opinion of the half-bred as being suitable to the district?—Yes; suitable to the district round Claremorris.

6534. You don't think the Hackney is suitable there, or do you think it is suitable?—I don't think it is suitable.

6535. You think the Hackney is more suitable when crossed with the mountain pony?—Yes, that is my own experience of it. I tried it in that way.

6536. All the produce of this Hackney sire and these mountain ponies, you say, is bought and taken out of the country?—Yes, most of them are taken away, with the exception of a few ponies that may be bred by private parties who send their mares there and get them served by the horse.

6537. Have you any practical experience of the produce at three or four-years old?—As a three-year-old I took a prize with it in harness, and one of these ponies as a four year old took a prize again.

6538. Yes, you have told us your own experience; I wanted to know rather if the produce is generally taken out of the country?—Oh, yes; the produce is generally taken out of the country.

6539. You cannot tell generally throughout the district what this produce turns out to be as three or four-year-olds?—I knew several of them that belonged to private parties who kept them and bred for themselves and they were very good.

6540. What kind of a sire was he?—About 15 hands high—"Star of the West" was. He was long and strong.

6541. And these mountain ponies that he was put to?—They were long, low ponies, something of the old Irish breed as described, with good reins and good backs, and well coupled.

6542. Do you know at all what becomes of their produce that is taken out of the country?—I don't know what they do with them afterwards. I got a cob bred by "Star of the West" out of a half-bred mare, and it was a very good cross. I sold it at a long price at Ballinasloe.

6543. Anything you would like to say to the Commission?—I think there is nothing particular that I have to say except that we would wish to see horse shows started and supported by Government in my neighbourhood.

6544. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Did I understand you to say that you consider that the Royal Dublin Society had done harm in your district?—Yes.

6545. I think then you said it was owing to their having sent down certain thoroughbred stallions?—Yes, on account of sending down a thoroughbred stallion that did not suit in the district.

6546. What stallion was that?—He was too light in bone.

6547. What stallion was that?—Locksley Hall and The Canon.

6548. What year was that in?—I could not give the exact year—about five years ago.

6549. That was under a different scheme, though, to what their present scheme is?—Yes, it was.

6550. Do you consider that their scheme as worked at present in your district is doing harm?—Well, it has done no good, all the hunters that are got by these sires are weedy.

6551. It is for that reason you would prefer to use a good half-bred stallion, approved of, with plenty of bone and substance and action?—Yes, because these mares have been tried with the half-bred before the thoroughbred came into the district and they have bred a very good class of horses, which have been sold in Ballinasloe at fairly good prices.

6552. What sort of half-bred stallion was in your district that you referred to just now?—A hunter class, a half-bred.

6553. You have some of that class there?—We have some few in that district.

6554. Have you any of what has been described as mongrel breed, half Clydesdale and half common?—There are some of these too in the district.

6555. Are they patronised?—Very little, but I believe if there is not some change they will be patronised because the people that have bred from those thoroughbreds that have been sent in are so disgusted with the produce that they say they will breed from anything now rather than send their mares to a thoroughbred.

6556. Are there any thoroughbred horses in your district?—There are some.

6557. Are they all bad?—People don't wish to breed from them, they consider what is produced by them is not strong enough and they are not marketable, as foals they are too delicate, not able to bear any sort of hardship. As yearlings they cannot dispose of them, as two-year-olds they cannot work them, as three-year-olds they are lying over in their hands and then they have to sell their dams and keep these weedy things and breed from them.

6558. What thoroughbred stallions are in your district?—I cannot just think of the names of them now, there are a few.

6559. CHAIRMAN.—Is there any stallion belonging to the Congested Districts Board near you?—No, there is not.

6560. What is the nearest?—Swinford, that is 14 miles away.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

Dec. 2, 1896.

THIRTEENTH DAY.—WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2ND, 1896.

Present:—The Earl of Dunraven K.P. (in the Chair), Lord Rathdonnell, Lord Ashtown, Sir. T. H. G. Esmonde, M.P., Mr. F. S. Wrench, Mr. J. L. Carew, M.P., and Mr. Hugh Neville, Secretary.

Mr. E. Kennedy.

Mr. E. Kennedy examined.

6561. Chairman.—You live in the county Kildare, do you not?—Yes.

6562. Near Straffan?—Yes.

6563. At Newtown Stud Farm?—I don't exactly live there; I keep horses there.

6564. Are you the manager of the Blood Stock and Hunter Sale and Insurance Agency?—Yes, I am.

6565. What is the nature of that agency?—I keep books in which horses from all parts of Ireland are registered for sale. I advertise occasionally in England, and write to clients that I know, and sell horses privately in that manner.

6566. Does the business of the agency take you about Ireland a good deal?—Yes; that and other business takes me through all parts of Ireland. I am reasonably acquainted almost with every part of Ireland where horses are bred. I don't know the North, but every other part of Ireland I am fairly acquainted with. I know all the horse fairs.

6567. Does your business take you to England?—I am taken to Yorkshire every week for about six months out of the year.

6568. What do you go to Yorkshire for?—I am connected with the cattle trade. I go there once a week for six months out of the year without missing a week.

6569. Do you breed horses yourself?—Yes, rather largely. I keep two thoroughbred stallions.

6570. What kind are your mares?—Nothing but thoroughbred mares.

6571. Nothing but thoroughbred stock?—Yes; I have a half-bred, and I keep her for old friendship more than anything else. I have got rid of all other half-bred mares I had.

6572. What class of horse is generally bred in your part of Kildare?—I think that in Kildare most people try to breed a really good hunter, with the exception of those like myself who prefer to breed thoroughbred horses, but the poorer farmers naturally try to breed hunters.

6573. What class of horse do you think is the most profitable to breed?—For the farmers the best high-class hunter they can breed. It is very hard for a poor farmer who is not very artistic in handling young horses to breed anything but a hunter. He is not altogether, perhaps, scientific enough to breed thoroughbred stock that will sell well, and it is far better for him to confine himself to breeding high-class hunters and high-class carriage horses.

6574. Which do you find pays best to breed—hunters or harness horses?—Oh, hunters, certainly. Then very often if a horse that farmers have got, by thoroughbred stallions, fail in becoming a hunter it very often becomes a harness horse, provided it is well grown.

6575. Do you keep your stallions entirely for the service of thoroughbred stock?—No; I have one horse which gets very few thoroughbred mares—all half-breds, all farmers' mares almost.

6576. Are there plenty of stallions in your part of Kildare?—I think quite sufficient good horses. Kildare has got the advantage of having the Curragh, which is the headquarters of the turf, and you have the advantage of having thoroughbred stallions always there. Kildare farmers have, I think, exceptional advantages for breeding.

6577. Are there any half-bred stallions serving in that part of the country?—Indeed, there are.

6578. What is your opinion about them?—I don't like them. I think there is very little demand for their stock now. At the same time, the farmers find they are cheap and convenient, and they are very often more fruitful than thoroughbred horses that are not properly looked after or properly exercised, and the farmers go to them sometimes for that reason, too.

6579. To get the hunter and high-class carriage horses in your part of the country you would prefer a thoroughbred?—Oh, certainly.

6580. Are there any other stallions of any other breed in your part of the country?—Not exactly in my part of the country. There is a half-bred, a few Clydesdale horses—not very many; they are more confined to county Dublin than in my immediate neighbourhood.

6581. Would they be used to get horses for the service of the trams and cars in Dublin?—I think the farmers like that sort of horse, and I think very often find they can sell a rough two-year old for any sort of work. They can work him as a two-year old and sell him after the spring work is over. They are bought for vanners and trammers at low prices that scarcely pays to produce them.

6582. What do they use for their own farm work?—Some of them use very useful mares that will breed a very useful hunter. Others of them who are ignorant of the advantage of breeding a good horse breed half-bred animals and sell them at a low price, but a great many of the Kildare farmers keep very useful mares.

6583. What kind of mares do they generally breed from?—Mares that are got by a thoroughbred horse out of, perhaps, some of the old native mares that one hears talked about. I mean mares that trace back to the old native mares.

6584. Is the quality of the mares, generally, as good as it used to be?—In my part of the country I really think it is; I am inclined to think it is, but Kildare being near the Curragh is exceptional.

6585. Do you think the farmers are more inclined than they used to be to sell their best mares and breed from inferior ones?—I think the Kildare farmers see the advantage of keeping their good mares more than the farmers throughout Ireland see it. They are so near the Curragh, and they see the advantage of the high prices that horses are sold at there. I think a great many of them like to keep their good mares. I know many of them who don't like to part with the mares at all that they have been successful with. But I am acquainted with other parts of Ireland, and I know that in these places the farmers always sell, the price is always tempting for them.

6586. Is the price kept up as it used to be?—I think that high-class hunters are sold dearer than ever they were—high-class hunters and horses calculated to win races and steeplechases. I think Ireland, during the last ten or fifteen years, has become the world's market for a really good horse, and I think it is the duty of Irishmen to maintain that reputation.

6587. We have had a good deal of evidence as to the price of high-class harness horses and hunters?—Their price is as good as ever it was.

6588. And we have got evidence that the inferior classes have gone down in price?—Yes, I think the American competition has had as much to do with

that as the motor car and the cycle. The enormous amount of horses coming over to London from the Argentine has completely beaten down the price of the moderate hack and van horse. They can sell these American horses to get a profit at about £24 each in London—I mean those from the Argentine—and it is very hard to compete with that low price.

6589. You have not yourself bred horses specially for harness?—No, never.

6590. I gather from you that that is not generally done in your part of the country?—Certainly not. However a great many horses that really fail to become high-class hunters, provided they are well-grown and got by a thoroughbred stallion, make very fine harness horses, and are very often sold at a good price for that market.

6591. I think you said that there are Clydesdale sires in your part of the country?—A few. They mostly walk through the country, coming out of the tillage parts of county Dublin.

6592. Are there many other stallions of any breed?—A few half-breds do that; with one or two exceptions, I don't think they get very much to do.

6593. Are there any Hackney stallions?—Not that I am aware of.

6594. Have you any knowledge of breeding from a Hackney sire?—Personally I have never bred from one.

6595. You are very well acquainted with the whole South and West?—Yes, I know it fairly well.

6596. And for how many years have you had experience of this country, generally?—About fifteen years.

6597. Speaking generally, would you say there has been any deterioration in the production of horses?—I think I might say that from 1880 to 1890 the farmers became very careless about breeding. Perhaps it was because hunting in most centres in Ireland was stopped in 1883. I think they thought the demand would slacken and decrease, and they became very casual and very careless about what they bred. I think since the efforts of the Royal Dublin Society within the past few years that all that is altered, and they are coming generally to really recognise now that if they take a little more care than they did before in their breeding that they will do better.

6598. Do you think there is a tendency in the farmers to sell their best mares, and that as a consequence the quality of the mares used generally throughout the country is not as good as it used to be?—I can't speak further back than ten or fifteen years. I have not had reason to think that they have deteriorated so much, with the exception, perhaps, that they were rather careless of the breeding within the decade—I mention from 1880 to 1890. Then I think that they, no doubt, sold anything they could convert into money at a reasonable price, but my impression is that they are improving now. Under the system of the Royal Dublin Society I think that the mares are improving very much indeed.

6599. Have you seen any Hackney produce in any part of the country?—The half-bred Hackney produce.

6600. Yes?—Yes, I have seen some foals that I have been told are half-bred Hackneys in the West.

6601. Could you not tell whether they were or not?—I could not be certain. I was told they were half-bred foals, I believe they were. I am thoroughly acquainted with the half-bred produce of Yorkshire which I am told are directly crossed with Hackneys or have Hackney strain. In Yorkshire and the midlands 60 to 70 per cent. of the animals one drives about in the cabs are a cross from the Hackney, I am told.

6602. Excluding the North, which you are not acquainted with, do you consider breeding hunters is the most profitable branch of horse-breeding in Ireland?—Well, I think, taking the farmers in Ireland who breed, certainly so. Speaking generally for the whole of Ireland, I should say, most certainly, yes.

6603. That is, the object of the farmer should be to breed the hunter, if he fails to hit that to sell him as a carriage horse, and if he fails in that, the horse will go for a remount?—Certainly, I think we ought all to try to maintain the reputation we have gained. During the last fifteen years we have been practically the world's market for the high class horse.

6604. Have you formed any opinion yourself as to the effects of the introduction of Hackney blood, or any blood other than thoroughbred?—Yes; I have. I don't think we have got in Ireland a market for anything else except a really fairly high class horse, except a market for a hunter or a harness horse; we have not got a market for anything else that would pay. I don't think it pays to breed from anything except a horse one can sell at a reasonable price, and I don't think we would be able to sell the produce of Hackney stallions at a reasonable price. I think quite 60 per cent. of the foals that are bred in the West of Ireland are sold to go into better countries. I think 60 per cent. of them find their way into Leinster. I have seen many hundreds at fairs lately in Leinster of the foals that are bred in the West, and I believe if the farmers find that the foals they buy only turn out small animals and don't grow—for instance, if they are got by the Welsh ponies imported—that the farmers will give up buying them, and that the middlemen will also give up buying them in the West. Some of the western foals brought into Leinster grow there into very fine horses. If they were got by big-boned thoroughbreds it would pay the farmers of Leinster to buy them, and growing well and paying very well I think the farmers would go back to the same market. I saw three hundred of them the other day in my own county town, brought up from Newport.

6605. How were they produced do you think?—They were produced from Connemara ponies, 14.2 to 14.3 hands.

6606. By what class of sire?—The half-bred sire that is walking about the country. I have seen one sire at Westport, "Abdullah," who has had a most phenomenal success in producing good well-grown horses from these Connemara ponies. He is about fifteen hands and was formerly the property of Lord Clanmorris, by "Thomastown." He is not absolutely pure-bred, but has a very distant stain that I can't trace. The size of his stock from these country mares is phenomenal.

6607. Mr. CAREW.—Ponies, you mean?—Yes, ponies. So, on the same grounds, if high-class thoroughbreds were sent there I think they would have the same share or a greater share of success.

6608. CHAIRMAN.—We have very often heard the opinion expressed, whether rightly or wrongly that in a great deal of the country the mares have deteriorated very much, that they have got small, that they are lacking in bone and substance owing to their being constantly crossed with inferior thoroughbred stallions; that a stronger strain of blood should be introduced; that the Hackney would probably supply the size and substance required, that the mares would be improved, and would probably produce better stock after a generation, of course mated again with a thoroughbred sire?—I have hardly personal experience enough to say that. I don't really think so myself. I believe a big-boned blood horse will get bigger produce than a Hackney.

6609. But are there many of these big-boned blood horses about the country?—I think there are lots of them to be had. This little horse "Abdullah" is not a big-boned horse, yet he has had the most phenomenal success standing at Westport. He produces really well-grown valuable horses.

6610. You think generally that the supply of the thoroughbred stallions throughout the country is sufficiently good?—Throughout Ireland do you mean generally?

6611. Yes?—No; I think there is room for a great deal of improvement.

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6612. I mean for half-bred mares to breed hunters, and so on?—I think there is room for a great deal of improvement. At the same time I think we are as well off as any country in the world for our thoroughbred stallions. There are a great many unsound horses, and I certainly agree with those people who would like to see them licensed by some Government department. I would like to see unsound ones struck off altogether.

6613. On that point, would you suggest a system of licensing or registration?—I should certainly advocate that the unsound stallions, be they of any breed—that stallions which are not calculated to get fairly useful stock—should not be allowed to serve any but their owners own mares. I should not like to see the owner of a stallion doing harm by having a worthless brute and letting him out cheap. I think it ought to be the province of an Agricultural Department to see that that would not go on.

6614. Do you think a hunter stud book would be practicable or useful?—Yes; I think it would be of great service to foreign buyers. If a foal were got by a thoroughbred horse it would be registered in the book, and if the owners of these animals had or could obtain certificates from a hunter's stud book, or from a hunter's registration book, I think it would be a great advantage to the owners in selling. I think it would also be a great advantage to the buyer to know what he got. Many horses which go out of this country are simply sold on the strength of having Weatherby's certificate of being from a thoroughbred horse. I think more animals in this country would be sold if people had certificates.

6615. Do you consider it necessary because of the American horses?—I think it becomes all the more necessary when all these American horses are coming into the country.

6616. Do you think these American horses ought to be branded or distinguished in some way?—Certainly.

6617. By "the country" do you mean England and Ireland?—Yes; I would like to have them branded in both countries.

6618. Do you think many of these horses are imported into Ireland and sold as Irish horses?—It is only hearsay, but I heard that they are being sold in that way. I have never, however, been aware personally of such a case.

6619. Have you experience of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes, I have.

6620. What do you think of it?—I think it is working most admirably, that is, as far as I can see, but beyond Leinster I have not visited the shows under the auspices of the Society's scheme.

6621. You think the system is good?—Certainly.

6622. And probably you think if the Society had larger sums at its disposal it could do more good?—I am quite certain of it.

6623. You think the Society is working on the right lines?—I do.

6624. I gather from you that you think generally it is the duty of every Irishman to keep up the reputation of the country for producing high-class hunters and harness horses?—I meant to include every high-class horse which would sell at a good paying price. I think it should also include the racehorse and the steeplechase horse. I think it is the duty of every Irishman to maintain the fame we have won of being almost the world's market for a high-class horse.

6625. Do you think it is possible for the small farmers to breed this kind of horse?—I think the small farmers in the west sell from sixty to seventy per cent. of the foals. At this time of the year they come into better countries, and have opportunities of developing and growing. I think if they all had thoroughbred stallions they would develop the produce into hunters, and failing hunters they would develop into harness horses or into troopers.

6626. Do you know Yorkshire well enough to give the Commission any information as to the effect of breeding Hackneys in that country?—I have gathered a good deal of information from people I met there, and I find it very much tallies. They all very much agree. They like them very much indeed, when they are bred by themselves and are thoroughbreds; but as far as I can find out they don't advocate their crossing. The Hackney breeders in Yorkshire that I met all swear by them as long as they are kept to themselves. They tell me that they don't think they can be successfully crossed. They won't cross with the mares of the country—in Yorkshire. That is the opinion I arrived at generally in Yorkshire.

6627. Do you think Ireland has got any particular natural advantages for breeding race-horses, hunters, and other high-class horses?—Oh! certainly—Our limestone land and our good rich pasture land. The mares milk so well on the good lands of Ireland, I think the young stock have an advantage beyond any other country.

6628. Do you think we should have an equal advantage in breeding the heavy draught horses and horses of that kind?—I think we have no heavy deep-ploughed land to use the heavy draught horses as they have in England. I think we have already made our mark for high class steeplechase horses and hunters, and I think we ought to keep to the reputation we have already gained. I don't think we have a market for the classes of animals you mention. I don't think it would pay the farmers to breed draught horses.

6629. You think it probable that the country having made its reputation by breeding the class of animal that is most useful to breed, it would be wiser therefore to stick to that class?—It would be wiser I think to stick to what we have been successful at.

6630. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say you know a great part of the South of Ireland from travelling through it?—Yes.

6631. Is not the general cry of the horse-breeder for bone and substance?—Certainly.

6632. Take the farmers, for instance. How do they try to get that?—You mean the smaller farmers throughout the south?

6633. Yes. How do they try to get bone and substance?—Well, I think a great many of them breed from a half-bred—what they call a hunter sire. I think that is their notion of producing bone. I think that they imagine that a horse three parts bred will produce bigger bone than a thoroughbred horse.

6634. Do you approve of that stamp of horse?—I would rather have a good class thoroughbred sire. I would like that stamp of horse well enough if I could not get a thoroughbred sire, but I would rather have a good class thoroughbred sire.

6635. I think you said just now in evidence that you don't quite approve of the half-bred sire, and I want to know what is the half-bred sire you don't approve of?—A horse with more of the cross of the Clydesdale or Suffolk Punch in him, such as I described now.

6636. But a horse like "Abdullah" you would not disapprove of?—He has a distant stain that can't be traced. I don't disapprove of him. I would rather have a horse that is in Weatherby; but if there is a distant stain, such as in "Abdullah" or "Mayboy," I would not altogether object to him on that account.

6637. If a half-bred stallion with good bone and good action of the hunter class was standing in the country, and that next door to him a half-bred Clydesdale, or a Clydesdale, or a Cleveland was standing, which do you think the farmers would chiefly go in for, if all were standing at the same fee?—In the South of Ireland?

6638. Yes.—I think they would go to the horse with three thoroughbred strains in him. I am certain they would.

6639. With regard to registration would you register all the produce of registered horses, or would

you have each animal examined before registration; that is letting each animal stand on its own merits? —I think it would be a very big business to have each animal examined—that is, each animal got by a registered sire.

6640. Supposing the mare to be registered also, you would not allow the produce of that mare to be registered without examination?—I would if the produce was got by a registered sire.

6641. Regardless of its soundness or unsoundness? —It would be an enormous business. I think it would not be possible. In my opinion all stock got by the registered stallions should be registerd regardless of their soundness.

6642. You think that would be too big a business? —Well, it would be a big business after a few years. It would be hardly possible, but not feasible. If they were out of a registered mare, and got by a registered stallion, I think that would be sufficient, for purchasers may be trusted to always defend themselves against unsound animals.

6643. Purchasers might, but if a mare were left in the country would you register that mare before she is going to breed? Would you have her registered as a mare out of a registered animal, or would you have her examined?—I think it ought to be sufficient if she is got by a registered stallion out of a registered mare.

6646. Mr. CAREW.—You spoke of "Abdullah" as a half-bred: is he not practically a thoroughbred? —Yes; there is only a distant stain in him.

6647. And that is the style of half-bred you approve of?—Well, yes, if I would approve of any half-bred. I always prefer a thoroughbred, but not being able to obtain a thoroughbred, I don't in the least object to a horse that has got a distant stain you could not trace—"Mayboy" for instance.

6648. He is practically a thoroughbred too?—Yes; he has a distant stain that cannot be traced.

6649. You spoke of Connemara ponies finding their way into Leinster?—Yes; about fifty per cent.

6650. You don't know if they were produced by Hackneys or not?—I asked the question of one man at the last fair in Naas, who had a number of them, and he told me they were not. I asked if he had got any by Government or Hackney horses and he said "No."

6651. Do you think it would be possible in Ireland to isolate the Hackney breed in the congested districts and keep them there?—Certainly not. They would be purchased with others to be imported into Leinster, which are the hunter producing grounds in Ireland, to be sold there.

6652. And you think they would deteriorate the hunting stock in Leinster?—I am inclined to think they would.

6653. Your experience, from what you have heard of Hackney breeding in Yorkshire, is that the crossing of Hackneys is disapproved of by the well-known breeders?—Any breeders I have spoken to are very fond of their Hackneys when kept to themselves; they don't so largely advocate the cross; they don't approve of the cross; they don't approve of the crossing with the country mares in Yorkshire.

6654. You think breeding from a thoroughbred by a thoroughbred sire will get good hunting stock and harness stock as well?—Certainly.

6655. And that it will be more popular with the buyers from England?—Yes, certainly.

6656. Have you any experience of breeding from two-year-old fillies?—Personally, none. A two year-old is too young to breed from, unless it is an exceptionally developed animal.

6657. Mr. WRENCH.—You would have thoroughbred stallions or horses with a slight stain?—That is my opinion.

6658. You would not have cart horses or half-bred cart horses at all?—I would not like to curtail certain farmers in certain districts in the north where it is all tillage from breeding Clydesdale horses.

6659. What about Kildare and the south?—We have no anxiety whatever for them.

6660. Do you know that out of the fifty-eight stallions in Kildare eighteen are cart horses or half-bred?—I don't exactly know the number. I knew there were some there. I didn't think there were so many as that.

6661. Do you know that cart horses and half-bred horses form more than one-third of the entire stallions in Ireland?—I am sure they would.

6662. There are a great many stallions in the country that ought not to be in it?—Certainly.

6663. You have referred to the west of Ireland. Does your experience of the west go beyond Westport? —I know Westport and Newport and that country.

6664. Have you been to Achill?—I have not. I have been to Ballina and beyond that country. I think I have been to Belmullet, but not lately.

6665. Have you been in Connemara?—I have been very little into Connemara; not much beyond Galway.

6666. Donegal you don't know?—I don't.

6667. Do you know the western coast of Kerry and Cork?—Yes.

6668. How far have you been there?—To Dingle, Caherciveen, Valentia.

6669. In Cork, have you been to Schull?—I don't think I have ever been to Schull.

6670. You would recommend that the ponies there should be crossed with a thoroughbred sire?—Certainly; the biggest boned and best thoroughbred sire possible; the better he is the better for the cross.

6671. Do you know there have been some sales lately of the results of that cross in Dublin?—I was not aware of it.

6672. You don't know there were twenty-six yearlings and two-year-old ponies by a thoroughbred horse sold in Dublin at an average of seven guineas a piece lately?—I wasn't aware of it.

6673. You didn't hear of Colonel Blake's sale of Connemara ponies got by a thoroughbred horse?—I did hear of it, but I didn't pay much attention.

6674. You didn't hear that thirteen of them were sold at an average of 52*s*.?—I didn't.

6675. That is not a very encouraging result of the cross?—Most discouraging; but I would like it to be understood that my principal reason for advocating the thoroughbred stallion there is that quite 50 per cent. of these ponies came into Leinster, and I think if they were got—I will not say by a Hackney—but by any inferior horse, say a Welsh pony, that the farmers up here in Leinster who buy them would soon become tired of buying and would not buy them at all.

6676. You think the trade for these people is to produce foals, so that if these turn out well up here people will go back and buy again?—Exactly.

6677. If you found that the result of the Hackneys were bought and produced good prices you might alter your opinion?—Most certainly. I would rather prefer from what I see—Hackneys to the small breed of Welsh ponies which I understand have been also imported into the West.

6678. You would prefer the Hackney to the Welsh pony?—Yes.

6679. Would you prefer the Hackney to an Arab or a Barb?—I can't say that. I have no experience of cross-bred stock of a Hackney or a Barb.

6680. You would prefer a thoroughbred to an Arab or a Barb?—Certainly.

6681. I suppose you know that in these congested districts it is necessary to have a sire that will produce hardy stock. I mean that the stock that is got has to go through great hardships, the land being very wretched?—Yes; the stock they keep down there has to be hardy.

6682. I think you referred to the Hackney not crossing well with the country mares in Yorkshire

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—I have only that as hearsay from the Yorkshire gentlemen I meet.

6683. You have not been about through the country districts in Yorkshire to see what these mares were?—I have seen them at fairs.

6684. Are they not very much coarser than anything we have in this country?—Yes.

6685. With a lot of cart blood in them?—Yes; a very bad class of mare.

6686. A mare that wants a thoroughbred horse if possible?—I should say so.

6687. They are big and not at all like anything we have in Ireland?—I think they are the worst class of mares I ever saw—the small farmers' mares in Yorkshire. I think that going into a Yorkshire fair, where you see the horses of the country, I have never seen anything so clumsy and underbred-looking in any part of Ireland.

6688. They are coarse and common?—They are coarse and common. When I go to Doncaster and see the horses that ply from the station to the course I always wonder how they get so many bad horses together, and most of these are half-bred Hackneys.

6689. You are strongly in favour of licensing stallions, and also of forming a hunters' stud book in Ireland?—Yes; I think it would be a great inducement to buyers from abroad.

6690. How far would you go in registration; would you register every horse, or merely form a hunters' stud book on the lines of the Hunters' Improvement Society in England?—I am afraid I don't know enough about the Hunters' Improvement Society lines in England.

6691. What is your idea of a hunters' stud book?—I would take the registered mares and the produce of registered stallions. It is hard to make a beginning and to draw the line in this hunters' stud book.

6692. Did you hear it suggested by some of the witnesses that every horse should be registered with the Petty Sessions clerk?—Every stallion.

6693. That every horse should be registered in exactly the same way as dogs?—I think that would be a very good suggestion if it was practicable.

6694. If a hunters' stud book was formed would there be any danger of the fear that you anticipate of Hackneys deteriorating hunters?—If the stud book was formed I certainly think it would lessen the danger, but the danger might still exist.

6695. But how could that be, if the breeding of the animals was registered?—There might be a good deal of fraud in these things. Hackneys might still get into the book. I am told that fraud has existed in a great many cases in the Hackney stud book in Yorkshire. I was told that only yesterday by a Yorkshire man. I was told that a great many horses have got into the book that are not Hackneys at all.

6696. You think it would be hard to guard against that?—I do.

6697. But it would lessen the danger?—I think the stud book would certainly lessen the danger.

6698. I think you made a suggestion at the end of your queries here that you were not quite satisfied with what the Government have done with regard to horse-breeding in Ireland up to the present, and suggested that steps should be taken to improve the fairs?—Certainly.

6699. What improvement of the fairs do you think is necessary?—I think the fairs as they are at present are altogether under the influence of the town commissioners. I think the majority of the town commissioners throughout Ireland are drawn from the publichouse interest, and they would like to keep the horses, buyers, and sellers, jogging up and down in front of their own doors in very narrow streets, and a great many buyers find that they cannot get reasonable trials of a horse, and people who have no direct interest don't like the horse to be taken into their fields in the neighbourhood, and jumped and galloped about there. I think all the good fairs in Ireland should be provided with a field where you can get a good test of what a horse can do—fence, gallop, jump, and so on. I think this would be an inducement to foreign buyers to come into the country. I think the fairs as they are at present are a disgrace to the people who look after them, to the commissioners of the various towns who look after them, with some exceptions only.

6700. You think if the accommodation was improved it would help the trade in horses?—Without doubt. I think it is a crying necessity to improve the fairs and the markets where the small farmers dispose of their stock.

6701. Do you approve of the present Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—I think it is working very well indeed. I should like to emphasize the fact that I think the fairs in Ireland are very disgracefully managed by the various commissioners who have the province of looking after them, with some exceptions, Limerick and Kilkenny.

6702. Mr. CAREW.—These are the town fairs of course?—The town fairs.

6703. CHAIRMAN—Are there as many horses sold at fairs as there used to be?—I think the high-class hunter is sold privately, but the young horses are always sold in the fairs—three and four-year olds.

6704. At what age are they mostly sold in your part of the country?—Four and five-year olds—mostly at four years.

6705. They run out all the time?—Almost all of them run out the whole of the winter.

6706. Are they generally fed at all?—I think they feed them reasonably; not, perhaps, as well as they might feed them.

6707. I gather that you think that in the western districts and the wilder part of the country the best possible stallion would be a good sound thoroughbred with plenty of bone?—That is strongly my opinion.

6708. Do you think the farmers in these districts would ever be able to pay the fee that would have to be charged by private owners for horses of that kind?—I think you can buy very useful thoroughbred stallions almost as cheap as you can buy horses of another breed. For instance, take the Yorkshire horses. I think you can buy them as cheap as a good Hackney stallion. I think you can buy a strong thoroughbred horse of the steeplechase type, perhaps not very fashionably bred, at a reasonable price to allow him to serve at a not exorbitant fee.

6709. You think the Government could have more suitable sires for the same price that they gave for the Hackney stallions?—I am not absolutely aware of what the Hackneys cost.

6710. Do you think that a thoroughbred stallion of the class you have in your mind can be bought for, say, £200 on an average?—I do, certainly. You might not be able to get him within six months, but take your time, and, I think, you would get a very reasonable supply for £200 each.

6711. You think it would be a good thing if such horses were standing in the same district as the Hackneys at the same fee so that people could have their choice?—I should like to see them have their choice.

6712. I think I gather generally that your opinion of the Hackney is that the pure Hackney is valuable, and is saleable, but that the cross is not good?—That is the opinion I gathered from my visits to Yorkshire. All the Hackney breeders there are very strong advocates of the thoroughbred Hackney, and have made very considerable sums of money breeding them.

6713. Assuming there being any money forthcoming or anything more done that is not done at present to try and improve the breed of horses generally in the country, do you think attention should be directed mainly to the improvement of the sires or mares?—Well, I should think, certainly, the sire. I

think if we had good sires, good mares would come in time. I think in improving the sires you would also be improving the mares at the same time. The produce of the sires in time would improve.

6714. It has been suggested that cast Government horses might be distributed about the country or sold cheap throughout the country?—You mean cast troopers. I think it certainly would be useful. I think that all the troopers one sees are all reasonably well-bred mares. I think they would do good.

6715. Is there anything else you can suggest to the Commission on the subject of improving the breed of horses generally?—Nothing further than my suggestion that all useful horses should be registered—that all thoroughbred horses should be registered. I should like to see the unsound horses of every class extirpated entirely. Let the owners use them if they wish for their own mares, but not use them to do harm to the public.

6716. You would have certain horses not absolutely thoroughbred—that is, not in the stud book—allowed to be registered—horses like "Mayboy," for instance?—Certainly—horses like "Mayboy."

6717. How far would you go in the direction of registering horses that are not thoroughbred, say, if they were examined and approved?—Yes, and with all stallions I should go rather for performance. If a horse had been a good steeplechase horse, and if he had a stain that could not be traced, I should certainly permit him to be registered in the hunter stud book.

6718. You think a horse should not be registered until there was some experience of his stock?—If the horse was right in every other way, say a good-looking well-bred horse, and had been a fair performer, I don't think any one would have any necessity to see his stock.

6719. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You advocate the formation of a stud book?—Or some general system of registration which could be used by foreign purchasers coming into the country.

6720. You said a stud book decidedly?—Yes, exactly.

6721. I suppose that has to be closed at some time or other, has it not?—Certainly. You mean for bringing out separate volumes.

6722. Would not there be a danger in that of excluding animals in the future from entry?—I don't quite catch your meaning.

6723. Would not there be a danger in that of excluding animals in the future from entry—animals which if only registration were used might be still eligible for entry on that registration?—I don't think you would close a stud book except to bring out various volumes.

6724. How do you propose then to enter in the future if you don't close your stud book?—I would have them entered exactly in the same way as they are entered in Weatherby's stud book.

6725. That is the produce of the stud book animals?—Certainly.

6726. That would exclude animals bred outside that stud book. You would have no chance of entering them?—I would bring in animals got by the ordinary thoroughbred sire or a horse seen fit to be registered in that way.

6727. If you call it registration?—I am quite satisfied then to alter the name to registration. I would rather like to have a stud book or a general system of registration. Either would perfectly satisfy me. I would like to see men with a certificate they could show to any purchaser who comes from abroad, and who could show the certificate abroad with the purchased animal. That would, I think, largely enhance the value of many of our horses. For instance when horses that are "placed" in races here are sold abroad, the entry of them as having been so placed is produced by the vendor in Ruff's Guide, and on this certificate the animal is sold. So I am sure the registration certificate would be extremely advantageous in selling Irish hunters.

6728. There is a difference between registration and a stud book?—With a general system of registration I would be perfectly satisfied.

6729. Would you limit animals to be registered for breeding hunters to such as are got by a thoroughbred sire?—I would, or such sires as "Abdullah" or "Mayboy"

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6730 CHAIRMAN.—You are Secretary to the Kildare Horse Show?—Yes.

6731. And to the Dublin Society's Horse-breeding Scheme in the County Kildare?—Yes.

6732. You know the county well?—Yes, pretty well.

6733. In your part of the county do the farmers breed much?—Yes; a good many breed. They breed from bad mares, instead of keeping good ones. It would be much better if they bred fewer; it would be much more paying. Small farmers breed, and have no method of breaking the horses or getting good prices for them. I don't see how it pays a lot of them to breed.

6734. What do they aim at breeding?—Hunters principally. When they fail as hunters they go off as carriage horses or as troopers. We give prizes at the show to farmers under £50 valuation, as we do to the bigger farmers, but very few of them enter. They say they have not time to waste a day in sending the animals into Naas.

6735. Do you think the small farmers can breed that kind of horse profitably?—Some of them can. They can sell them as longtails about the place. I think it is very hard for a lot of the small farmers to do it profitably. They breed them and work them as two-year-olds, and then try to sell them as longtails. If a small farmer had a really good mare people would get to know it, and they would go to him and buy his young horse.

6736. What are the class and quality of the mares generally?—I think they are well-bred mares, most of them. A lot of them I know about the country have been broken-down hunting or racing mares, or have been given as presents to farmers, who keep them and work them. Any mare that does not breed easily they send to a cart-horse, and the produce they keep to breed from, and then, I think, the produce is uncertain. One might be one year a good hunter and the next not much good.

6737 What kind of cart-horses do they send them to?—One man has what they call an Irish cart horse. He has very little hair on his legs, is a very strong horse, and looks like a cross of the Clydesdale. Near me is a man who has a horse that gets a lot of mares that are fairly useful. I have often tried to get him to tell what the breeding is, but the man says that he does not know the breeding of the horse or he won't tell it. It is what he calls an Irish cart-horse, but it is a good useful stamp of horse to get a tram horse or a canal horse, but it is not a very hairy-legged horse.

6738. The produce of these cart stallions are put again to a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, in a great many cases.

6739. What they produce is somewhat doubtful?—Very doubtful. I bred one myself from a cart-horse—a useful sire—and a grey mare that had a certain amount of quality. Her first foal is now as good a hunter as ever was seen; her next was bred exactly

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the same way by the same stallion, and is a useless sort of a carriage-horse. One showed quality, and the other threw back to something or other.

6740. Is your part of the country well supplied with useful sires—sires suitable to the mares in the country?—Very well supplied; we are very well off. We are so near the Curragh that we have a supply of good stallions.

6741. Have you any personal experience of breeding from these cart-horses?—Only in this way by this one mare who was from one of these cart-horses. I didn't breed from her again after the second one.

6742. Have you bred at all, or have you any experience of breeding from the Hackney sire?—No; the only experience I know of is that of a man who sold a very valuable horse as a hunter and was known as the breeder of valuable animals; he bought a young mare the other day and found out it was a Hackney mare by a Hackney horse, and he sold in case his reputation would go.

6743. Who did he buy it from?—He bought it somewhere in Galway, I think. The only other thing I know about a Hackney was selling a pony that came from Mayo somewhere; Meleady got it. I was selling her to a man as a polo pony, and drove the buyer in a trap with her to the station. There he looked at her action, and he said he was afraid she had Hackney blood, and he would not take her then.

6744. Then I gather from you that, as far as you can judge, you would not think the introduction of Hackney blood would be beneficial?—I should say certainly not, as far as Kildare is concerned. A certain amount of it is bound to be brought into Kildare where I should say it is certainly not wanted. It would spoil the sale of the horses a great deal. We have tried in our show under the Hunters' Improvement Society to register some of the mares in our part, and have got ten or twelve mares entered into their book, and the produce of every one that is entered is examined by us. Some of them entered are two and three-year-old mares. Out of the two-year-old mares shown last year at Naas for breeding purposes four have been kept on as brood mares as three-year-olds. All took prizes this year except one that was unsound, and the man said he would not breed from it any more. The prizes that induced them to keep them on as brood mares are worth seven to ten pounds. There are five or six prizes in each class. There are also prizes for foals, so that a man may make £10 at the show. That pays for the keep of them, and they are able to work them too.

6745. Do you agree with Mr. Kennedy that the thoroughbred, or a selected and approved half-bred, is the best to get high class hunters and carriage horses?—Certainly; I think a thoroughbred horse the best, or any horse like "Mayboy" who has only a stain of three or four generations ago, which was probably caused more from carelessness than anything else. In Kildare the registered horse is beginning to do good. In the show of '95 only one horse in the whole show got a prize, which was by a horse not registered, and this year there was absolutely none, though several were shown.

6746. You think the Royal Dublin Society scheme works well in Kildare?—Yes; before the farmers went to the nearest horse and the cheapest, now they are beginning to understand that the scheme is really to help them, in giving prizes to the mares. Several men have shown their mares every year, and are taking prizes every year. I think that is a good thing, for if a man has got a good mare it encourages him to keep her.

6747. Do the farmers generally appreciate a good sire?—They do; but money has a good deal to do with it. They will always try to bargain with you. A lot of them will pay a lot more on the sight of a foal. Many would rather pay £5 on the sight of a foal than £2 or £3 at the service of the mare.

6748. Do they breed from two-year-olds?—Yes; we give prizes for the two-year-olds, and a lot of them breed. We give as much for two-year-olds as we give for the aged mares. There are very few entries up to this in the Naas show, but each year we are getting better. Three years ago it was only three, it is now up to seven or eight. There is a very good class of two and three-year-olds.

6749. Do you approve of breeding from two-year-old fillies?—I think it depends on the shape of the animal to a great degree. Some are delicate, but a strong thick one I would not mind breeding from at all. I have bred from them myself—from a two-year-old only moderate sized filly—bred a 16 hands high hunter which was sold last year.

6750. Do you think the farmers generally understand the importance of breeding from a good mare instead of breeding from any mare?—They know well enough, but they can't resist getting the money when they can, and then they chance a bad mare. They say "she may be a fairly good breeding mare, and may throw back to the sire and not show her own deformity."

6751. Sir T. Esmonde.—Do you say you have adopted the system of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—We have affiliated with them, and joined them. They enter the mares. They gave us five free nominations the first year. Besides that, where we entered mares that didn't get the gold medal or silver medal we got five free into this year, and we have about ten or twelve entered in their book up to this. They are principally young ones. These young ones—two and three-year-olds—were shown at Naas show, and one won first prize in the open class judged by different judges. They are a good class to keep if we could encourage them to keep them.

6752. Do you think that system will encourage the keeping of good mares?—I think it would do so. I would be for giving more money to really good ones, though I would encourage moderate animals with small prizes. I have no objection to giving prizes year after year to a good one until some one produces a better one.

6753. You would give the prizes according to merit?—I would give a prize to the best till a better one came. A five-year-old mare this year beat all the others—two or three were complaining, saying, the same mares were over and over again getting prizes. I tried to tell them if they got a good mare they would be as likely to get a prize as the other man.

6754. Is this the first year you have adopted the system?—This is three years now; but this is the first time we got free nominations. Kildare Show has paid for entering in the book two or three mares every year. We have had a gold medal or a bronze medal, and £5 which they generally take for the last three or four years, and this year they gave a silver medal for young mares—two and three-year-old mares—as well.

6755. You find that the farmers like the system?—They like these medals very much. Two of them, instead of taking the bronze medal and £5, preferred a gold medal, but they much prefer the silver medal they gave this year, it is much more showy.

6756. They are beginning to understand the system?—Yes; they have asked me could they not show mares in foal by unregistered sires. It wants more advertising still. They are beginning to find out it is for their own good.

6757. Mr. Carew.—You say Hackneys are in disfavour in Kildare?—Yes.

6758. Were many exhibited in Kildare?—Very few; but there seemed to be a strong feeling against them.

6759. You think it would be impossible to keep them out of Kildare if bred in Ireland?—Half-bred ones by a Hackney may get into Kildare. Some mares we think are well bred may be by Hackneys; you can only go by eye.

6760. Mr. Wrench.—Would you prefer to be affiliated to the Hunters' Improvement Society or

would you prefer to have an Irish Hunters' Improvement Society?—I think we ought to have an Irish one.

6761. You would advocate it being started?—It would do a lot of good, I think.

6762. On the same lines?—Yes, and being very careful what is entered in it.

6763. Do you think there would be much danger of not being able to tell how the horses were bred?—I think there is a great deal.

6764. If a Hunters' Improvement Society was started, do you think there would be as much danger?—Yes; a horse who was successful in one part of the country and every horse from that part of the country now is always from that animal.

6765. You think that practice is likely to continue?—I think it will.

6766. You know that the Dublin Society have received suggestions to alter their scheme this year. Would you approve of that?—No; I think the Autumn show does very well in Kildare, because you see the produce as well at the same time then. I think it was better for the stallion class that there were nominations. They get better by it, because you get so much for each nomination. The Dublin Society scheme gave you £2 for each paper you sent in. Now the stallion owner has to make the best terms he can with the farmers. At the Autumn show we get now a much better class of mares than at the Spring shows. At one of the shows there were only three animals. At Donadea a large number came, but that is the only time there was ever a big Spring show. The farmers said they were too busy.

6767. You think it is better to keep to the same system?—I think it is beginning to work very well.

6768. You are rather speaking against your own interests?—I think it is against one's own interest. I think they ought to be subsidised—the good ones. Really there is no inducement to register your horse whatever now, except that they are beginning to come more to the better horses and to the registered horses than to the unregistered horses. In fact the unregistered horses are having a bad time of it in Kildare just now, I think.

6769. They will probably disappear?—I think so, and I will get the blame of it as being Secretary of this scheme.

6770. CHAIRMAN—When you say you are affiliated with the Hunters' Improvement Society, what do you mean?—I mean the Kildare Horse Show.

6771. What have you got to do?—We pay them £1 a year, and I try to get as many of the people to join it as I can. For that they give us a gold medal for a mare and a silver medal for young mares, and they give us free entries into their Show in London. So that they are very liberal, I think. There are four or five people in Kildare belonging to it now. I think it is a most useful society.

6772. What are the general lines it goes on?—It enters mares that have got prizes at these Shows, and the pedigree has to be very carefully entered if they be passed free from hereditary disease by competent veterinary surgeons. They enter these mares and take a note of their produce, and they will enter these, too; if they can be passed free. Then they allow a certain number of stallions to be entered that are not quite thoroughbred. There are various rules for that laid down. I think it is the third generation. I think something on that principle might be worked in Kildare. There are one or two half-bred horses in Kildare got good horses. The late Lord Waterford's "Zingari" got good horses. He was not quite thoroughbred, but very nearly.

6773. You think we ought to have something of the same kind in Ireland?—I think so. If we stopped them breeding from the worthless things they do breed from it would be a great thing.

6774. Would it not be better if they could get liberal assistance?—Whatever one can get most money out of is the best.

6775. Do you think, speaking generally, there has been any deterioration in the quality of mares or their produce in the way of hunters and high-class carriage horses in Kildare to your knowledge?—I think you would see a lot of rubbish going to fairs, and they say they can't sell them; that is principally because they are bad. I think that really good mares and high-class horses are there still, and men keep the good ones. Dealers come to the same farmers time after time if they have had one good one from him.

6776. Taking it generally, would you say in your part of the country that the farmers are more inclined to sell good mares, keeping their inferior ones?—Some will keep their good ones, but they cannot resist a good price occasionally, and will try something that has met with an accident or a good-shaped one. There are a lot of mares about the country that have been good hunters or racing mares, and have been hurt and passed into the possession of farmers. They are breeding with them now, and they do the farmer's work.

6777. Mr. CAREW.—They are quite good enough to do the farm work?—Yes; in the south of Kildare there is more tillage, but all about us is light work, and a light animal is able to do it all.

6778. CHAIRMAN.—Are you in favour of licensing stallions or of registration?—I should be inclined to license them. Registration is doing a lot of good, but I would be more particular still.

6779. You would consider it a danger if the Hackney produce should drift from the congested districts into the other parts of Ireland; you think that would be prejudicial?—I think so. The dealers are very particular in asking the breeding, and finding out about it. I think it would, certainly.

6780. Have you any idea how they got this prejudice against the Hackney?—Seeing them in different shows. They see them trotting, and one dealer remarked to me that the back bone of one horse was the wrong way up. They wanted it arched the other way for a hunter—it is hollow in a Hackney. I have seen in a veterinary surgeon's yard the bone of a thoroughbred and the bone of a Hackney. One seems quite porous and light, and the other like ivory and hard, and weighs more, although it might be smaller than the other.

6781. Are you pretty well acquainted with the South of Ireland generally?—I have been to Glenbeigh. We had a camp down there—soldiering—and I was going about the country there a great deal in spare time, and talked about their horses with the farmers. I was there two or three years. I thought they looked well-bred mares. The animals were poor small things, but they worked uncommonly well. They carried large loads thirty miles a day. They were not a big breed—probably not more than fifteen hands. A lot of them were working on the new railway to Cahirciveen, and the contractor paid them six shillings a day. I saw very few more than sixteen hands high. These did the cartage of big heaps of stuff away from the railway to make cuttings and things like that. The contractor seemed very well satisfied. I also saw a very bad class of stallion down there. They were small wretched animals. If they had a good class of animals there they would get quite good enough animals.

6782. I gather that you approve of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—I think certainly that this is the right one now of giving the money to the mares.

6783. Would you suggest any way in which it could be improved?—I would say give more prizes, and hold more local shows, which do a lot of good, because people see the class of animal that is there, and what they ought to breed. They see their friends have a good mare, and send to a good horse, and they do the same. Small local shows would be a good thing.

6784. Do you think, as a rule, the distribution of

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money prizes, or whatever it might be, ought to be entrusted to local committees?—I think so. We have a large committee in Kildare, under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme. We have six gentlemen, six farmers, and a secretary, and between us we work it somehow or other. In fact it is left to us to distribute the prizes.

6785. How was your committee formed?—The Royal Dublin Society appointed a chairman, and he asked anybody he thought was interested in horse breeding to make up this number. I think it is composed of six gentlemen and six farmers of the neighbourhood that we thought would be interested in it, and would take a little trouble. We asked them if they would serve on the committee, and they all agreed to; we had no refusals.

6786. As vacancies occur do you fill them up by election or nomination?—Anybody would suggest one and we would think of it, but we have had no vacancy yet. Generally the chairman suggests somebody, and he writes and asks if that person will agree to serve on the committee, and the reply is "yes."

6787. You find the farmers are anxious to serve on it?—Yes, and they attend the meetings very well. We don't have many meetings, one just before our show and one the other day to consider a letter from the Royal Dublin Society who asked us to send in recommendations on the scheme; they always attend to anything like that.

6788. Supposing any large system of registration was started throughout the country, what would be the best authority to deal with it—the police or the petty sessions clerk?—I think it would have to be done by a society like the Hunters' Improvement Society, or an agricultural department of the Government. I don't think a petty sessions clerk would have time to do it or be able to do it accurately enough. I should be very particular before entering them in a book. I should find out all about them.

6789. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Are you on the Royal Dublin Society's Horse-breeding Committee?—No.

6790. Are you on the Horse Show Committee?—On the Horse Show Committee.

6791. Have you heard that it is likely there will be any alteration in the horse-breeding scheme this year?—A thing came round to the different committees to ask their opinion on the present scheme. I think it was started by the County Dublin Committee, which said this scheme was no good at present. I think the thing is left to the different counties—whatever works in the different counties.

6792. Have you heard it said that it would be left optional to each county committee to select either of the two schemes?—I didn't hear that.

6793. The nomination system or the premium system?—I didn't hear that.

6794. Would you be inclined to approve of county committees having the option?—I think so—certainly. Different districts would want the thing worked differently, I think.

6795. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think many false pedigrees find their way into the Hunters' Improvement Society's books?—I should not say they did. They seem very particular. You sign a certificate, and they get it signed not only by the owner, but by the breeders of the mare. They are very particular about it.

6796. If a Hunters' Improvement Society was formed in Ireland they ought to be just as particular here?—I think they ought to be very particular. It would be very hard to start the book, and you would get very few at first. You ought to be very particular in forming a book like that.

6797. It practically would not be very much good unless you could rely on it?—I think not.

6798. The dealers who come into Kildare are chiefly hunter dealers or come from polo ponies? We haven't many polo ponies in Kildare—but what are bought from other places or sold.

6799. But you spoke about a polo pony buyer who came to you?—He was a polo player who came down. I had played with him. I trained the pony myself.

6800. You were talking about the bone of a Hackney?—I forget the name of the horse.

6801. Was it in a veterinary yard? Did you see it in Ireland or England?—At Weedon in England, when I was soldiering, it was our veterinary surgeon got it; I forget the name of the horse at the present moment.

6802. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything you would like to suggest to the Commission?—I think if they could improve and add something for the registered horses and give more prizes to the mares in certain districts—I think that would be a good thing.

6803. You mean the present system carried out more fully?—I think if carried out more fully it would do more good than anything else. I think it is beginning to work well now. Of course it takes some time to get the thing fairly started.

Mr. Thomas Anderson.

Mr. THOMAS ANDERSON, Levitstown, Athy, examined.

6804. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Kildare?—Yes, my lord—South Kildare.

6805. Are you engaged in farming?—Yes, very largely.

6806. Do you breed horses yourself?—Not so much now as at one time; latterly I go in more for buying colts than for breeding. I breed draught horses still.

6807. Do you think it pays better to buy than to breed?—I do.

6809. What do you buy?—Four or five or three-year-old colts that would make good hunters

6810. Where do you buy them?—Largely in the south.

6811. You go about the country looking for them?—Yes.

6812. When do you sell them?—I sell them at four-year-old.

6813. And you still breed draught horses?—Yes, still largely—and must have a heavy horse for that sort of work.

6814. For your own purposes?—Yes.

6815. Do you sell them?—I generally wear them out.

6816. Are they out of your own mares?—Out of my own mares.

6817. What kind of sire?—Usually a Clydesdale horse or a Shire horse.

6818. Do you buy three-year-olds at all in your part of the country?—Sometimes I do, but never from a small farmer.

6819. Three and two-year-old colts?—Under four or five years.

6820. And not one from a small farmer?—Not from a man, I think, who is under £100 valuation.

6821. Do you think the small farmer is unable to breed?—He is not breeding a good horse just now in our district.

6822. What are they breeding?—There seem to be two classes of mares; of course there have always been Shires and Clydesdales in our district—some are heavy and suited for heavy work: the other seems to have got weedy and too light.

6823. Some too heavy and others too light?—They look like that.

6824. How long have you been buying in this way?—For some years.

6825. And do you find you have to give the same

price in the south that you used to?—I don't think the price of colts has changed very much; they are easier bought than they were, but not to any great extent.

6826. Where do you buy generally—at fairs?—At fairs, or at home if I can hear of a good horse.

6827. As far as the fairs are concerned, do you think they are as good as they used to be?—I think they have deteriorated greatly. All the better class horses are bought at home and never come to fairs—they are bought by dealers, the majority of them.

6828. Are they bought at home more than they used to be?—Yes; the good horses that are in the country don't come to fairs; they are all picked up. You never see a really valuable five-year-old horse at a fair.

6829. You think the good horses are as much in the country as ever they were?—I think so.

6830. Do any ponies come into your district?—There are some good ponies bred in the district.

6831. What are they used for?—I bought some polo ponies in the district which turned out well.

6832. Bought them and sold them as polo ponies?—Yes.

6833. Bred in Kildare?—Yes, all.

6834. How were they bred?—All by thoroughbred horses, and in some parts of Wicklow by a pony called "The Midge," a Harrow pony I have heard of: I don't know what they were, but some I got, they had some blood in them.

6835. These were not bred in your county?—Yes; but they seem to be spread over the country to a certain extent.

6836. Do any ponies come from the West?—Yes, a lot.

6837. What kind are they?—Useful trappers; they never exceed 15 hands—14·3—very useful animals for driving. I think the farmers in our district, the larger ones, are very largely horsed as regards their driving by Connemara ponies.

6838. Have you bought any yourself?—One or two, but I have never seen a Connemara polo pony; if I do buy I try to get ponies to make polo ponies; they are not quality enough.

6839. How are they bred?—Out of the mares of the country by a nondescreipt half-bred sort of animal. Many of these Connemara ponies carry boys and girls well to hounds, and are capital jumpers.

6840. You said you gave about the same prices as formerly?—I was not buying them until the last six or seven years. In that time I don't think there has been much of a drop in the three-year old colt.

6841. Do you think the price of high-class harness horses and hunters has kept up?—I think so. The high-class hunter is as good as ever he was it is so difficult to get him.

6842. Did you hear the evidence of Colonel De Robeck and Mr. Kennedy?—Yes.

6843. Do you agree generally with them?—I don't agree with them in the condemnation of the Hackney; they think the thoroughbred is the only horse. It is absolutely necessary to have something else.

6844. Why do you think it necessary?—You must have draught horses in our district; you cannot do heavy carting with the thoroughbred horse. You must have bone somewhere, and I think in hunting breeding you must have bone, and the question is how you are to get it.

6845. Do you think the mares producing these high-class hunters are deficient in bone?—There are very few bred in our district.

6846. You say they must have bone, do you mean throughout the country generally?—They must.

6847. How do you think that can be obtained?—Supposing you take a good draught mare and cross with a thoroughbred, I think that animal would be likely to produce a hunter. If you go any further than that you degenerate into weeds.

6848. You think to prevent degeneration into weeds there ought to be a cross, with what kind of blood?—I think the half-bred horse, such as we ride to hounds, a horse of that class would give the bone. We have many mares too weedy to be put to a thoroughbred, and with a horse with bone of that description something useful might be bred. The fairs are filled with light weight useless animals, no use for anything in these days of the bicycle; some might carry a lady or light weight, but they are all using bicycles now, and the price of these animals has deteriorated tremendously.

6849. Do you know the horse that has been described as the Irish draught horse?—I do; we have got lots of them about us.

6850. What are the cart horse sires in your part of the country like?—I own some that are called Irish draughts—good body—lightish-looking horses, without much hair on their legs, and then, of course, there are the pure-bred Clydesdales and Shire horses.

6851. Do you think the cross with the Clydesdale or Shire would be more likely to give the bone you consider necessary than the cross with the thoroughbred—to produce a good hunter?—I think so.

6852. How about the Hackney?—I don't understand the condemnation he has come in for. To look at the Hackney stallion I think he would be a good animal, failing the horse I speak of, a half-bred horse, but I don't see that he is to be got at present; I don't see him anywhere.

6853. You think, speaking generally, that the mares and stallions in the country require something to improve them?—In North Kildare they are exceedingly well off. We don't benefit by the Society's scheme at all; it is entirely confined to North Kildare.

6854. Then the scheme is not in operation?—Practically it is not in operation in our district; it is entirely confined to the northern portion of the county; there it is working admirably; they have got a better class of stallions. Down with us I don't think the stallions are good enough.

6855. You do not agree that sound thoroughbred stallions with good bone would give sufficient stoutness to the class of mares?—To many it would; some are quite heavy enough. There is not much horse-breeding in our part of the county, and except by large farmers, who have got good mares, there are very few good animals bred.

6856. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say that you would cross a Clydesdale stallion with a half-bred mare, or a thoroughbred horse with a Clydesdale, to get a good hunter?—Not to get a hunter, but that animal might be useful to get a hunter—a thoroughbred put to her again.

6857. I understood you to say a second cross would be weedy?—No, the first cross would be all right to be put to a thoroughbred horse, the first cross, a half-bred, I think would be likely to produce a good hunter; if you then use the third cross with a thoroughbred it would be weedy. I don't fancy the Clydesdale. I would rather have an Irish draught mare to start on as a foundation.

6858. Have you ever hunted one of that description?—I did. I have a very good horse now got out of a Clydesdale mare.

6859. Was there any thoroughbred blood in her?—Irish draught. I don't know how it is got.

6860. Do you know the name of the horse?—Which?

6861. The Irish bred horse?—I bought this mare in Wexford, and the mare I have now is out of her by rather a clean-boned Clydesdale I had myself; this old mare I speak of had a good deal of the Irish draught mare.

6862. Do you remember a horse called "Huntsman"?—Yes.

6863. In what class would you put him?—The sort I am speaking of—the half-bred horse that

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would get useful stock in our part—I would put him to some of the weedy mares I talked of.

6864. He had been hunted and ridden to hounds?—Yes; he would be a most valuable horse.

6865. For bone?—Yes; very much better to get it that way than by going to the draught horse.

6866. You prefer him to the draught horse?—Undoubtedly.

6867. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Would this mare correspond with the old Irish mare?—She would, I suppose, as far as I have heard or seen.

6868. Do you think there is such a thing as a special breed of the old Irish mare?—There was undoubtedly some noted breed; it was a good deal thoroughbred.

6869. It was crossed with the thoroughbred?—I should think so.

6870. You never came across anything you could say was an old Irish mare?—No; I should fancy there always have been thoroughbreds in Ireland; it is only of late years that Clydesdales and Shires were introduced.

6871. These two mares you talked of you don't think they had Clydesdale or Shire blood in them?—I could not say; but I think the introduction of Clydesdale is comparatively recent in Ireland.

6872. Mr. CAREW.—You say North Kildare is much better off for sires than South Kildare?—They have a much better class of stallion.

6873. How would you suggest they should be improved in South Kildare?—I think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme is very good as worked in North Kildare. I am a member of the Kildare Horse Show, and have attended every year, and saw a marked improvement in the quality.

6874. Are there many exhibits form the South?—There are none at all from the South—not a single animal.

6875. Are not one fourth of these exhibited from the South?—Not from the Athy district—I am sure of that; there may be from Ballitore, but not nearer me than that, and that is ten or twelve miles away.

6876. Do you think Naas is too far from the centre of the county?—No, I cannot say I do; when the Society gave nominations we had shows of mares as near Athy as possible, and they were not patronized; the farmers did not send, and they didn't seem to catch on; it often takes a very long time to get them to catch on to a thing. In Carlow they are not catching on to it, and though they are adhering to the old class of nominations there the class doesn't seem to be improving.

6877. You don't agree with the condemnation of the Hackney?—No, from what I have seen.

6878. You have no experience of Hackneys?—I have not used them or driven them.

6879. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know anything about the West of Ireland?—I know Mayo pretty well; I have never lived there, but have been down there pretty often.

6880. Have you been at some shows of the Congested Districts Board at Belmullet and Achill?—Yes, I have this year.

6881. And had you the experience of seeing the mares and young stock there?—I only saw 300 at one show.

6882. Were you able to form any opinion from what you saw or heard as to what would be the best class of sire to send to Belmullet or Achill?—I was. I think that the Hackney, in the absence of the half-bred horse such as I described, is the best horse for that district.

6883. Would you be inclined to send a thoroughbred there?—No, I don't think so; I think the produce would be too weedy, unless you get good bone in the thoroughbred, which you seldom do.

6884. You would be in favour of sending the Hackney to those districts?—Yes; I would.

6885. You have since seen the sires belonging to the Board?—Yes.

6886. And do you think they are suitable to send down?—With one or two exceptions.

6887. But as a rule?—As a rule, I think they are suitable to the district.

6888. I think you said you bought a good many horses from farmers in your district?—Yes.

6889. Are they large farmers?—Yes, chiefly; at least their farms run over £100 valuation.

6890. Are they the men that breed good hunters in your district?—I think so.

6891. Do you think there is any danger of these men using puny mares that come from the West as hunter brood mares?—I think they would be bred from undoubtedly.

6892. Do you think they would be bred from to breed hunters—the animals you have seen coming from the West?—If the stock was reared on good land they might produce a hunter; they run up to nearly 15 hands, and have pretty good bone and substance.

6893. Those that come up now?—Yes; those that come up now.

6894. Do you know of many hunters being sold in your district that have Clydesdale blood in them?—I have known of horses being sold with Clydesdale blood in them, and a good deal of it, too.

6895. And there are cart horses and Clydesdales standing in that part of the country?—Yes, there have been for a considerable time.

6896. Have you formed any opinion about registering horses?—I think mares ought to be registered, and I think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme good as regards giving the prizes to the mares, but I think the stallions ought to be improved; the system of registration of stallions is good, but I think the system of inspection should be more stringent; and a great many horses at present registered by the Society should not be allowed to be registered, sound or otherwise. The system of registering sound mares is very good. I know it is very difficult—you buy three-year old colts; they look very good to make hunters, but when they come to five years, you find they are whistlers. That must come from somewhere—it must be hereditary; and as we are told the stallions are sound, it must come from the dams, and I think the dams should be registered as well as the sires.

6897. You would have them examined for soundness?—Yes.

6898. Is unsound wind becoming very prevalent in Ireland?—I think it is; the number of horses which should be valuable as hunters, rejected for whistling, is very large.

6899. You have not sold or bred many harness horses?—I have sold horses which were not good enough for hunters or harness horses.

6900. Do hunter misfits make as much money as harness horses?—No, not so much.

6901. The CHAIRMAN.—In buying these three-year-old colts in the South do you ascertain how they are bred?—I always endeavour to get their pedigree.

6902. Do you find any difficulty?—It would be very much easier if the breeder could hand you the certificate of the service of his mare, and show you how the dam was bred, and show you a service note saying that the mare was served in such a year, and that this was the produce of the service; at present we have just got to take the statements that we receive, and in many cases they are quite untrue.

6903. And for the western districts that you know you think the Hackney is a useful kind of sire?—I think so from the class of work the animals have to do—carrying big back loads from the sea. You must have plenty of bone and a certain amount of strength.

6904. I want to be quite sure that we exactly understand your opinion. I understood you to say you approved of the Hackney, provided you could not get a

half-bred horse?—I think that a half-bred horse ought to be provided in the country, and I think it should be done by Government; that horse should be sent through the different districts, and half-bred horses should be placed on the register so that people could use them if they wished.

6905. The thoroughbred sires you are speaking of, what are they?—I don't think the ordinary thoroughbred as we see him—the more valuable animal—would be a good horse for that district. I didn't see the produce in the shows of the Congested Districts Board of any thoroughbred horse, but I saw the produce of Welsh cobs, Arabs, and Barbs, and I don't think any of them as suitable as the Hackney for the purpose.

6906. You said, in speaking of the half-bred, you preferred him to a thoroughbred, provided he had sufficient bone and was sound?—Yes.

6907. So I gather that your opinion is, that for these western districts the thoroughbred, provided he was a suitable thoroughbred, or the half-bred if he had bone, would be as valuable or more valuable than the Hackney?—I would do it in this way, because of the prejudice which seems to exist against the Hackney.

6908. Put away the prejudice—we would like to know your own opinion?—From all I read about the Hackney I would imagine he has good action and good staying powers; if we read the evidence of the dealers they say the produce of the Hackney will not stay, and that they are not any good as harness horses. Of course I have no personal experience, but my idea is that a Hackney stallion put to a half-bred mare would produce a very good animal to breed hunters; that would be my own idea.

6909 And put it to the thoroughbred afterwards?—Yes; I would rather have it than the draught blood.

6910. Are there any suggestions which you would like to make to the Commission?—Except about the registration of stallions. If continued by the Royal Dublin Society it would be a very considerable improvement in many districts that the stallions should be improved and the inspection made more stringent.

Captain TOWNSHEND, Derry, Rosscarbery, examined.

Captain Townshend.

6911. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County of Cork?—Yes, in the south of the County of Cork.

6912. Have you any personal experience in breeding horses there?—I have been breeding them about fourteen or fifteen years. I keep two thoroughbred stallions.

6913. And what class of animal do you aim at producing?—I have been trying my best to produce the high-class hunter ever since I have been breeding—for the last fifteen years.

6914. What class of mare do you use?—I, myself, have always used what I suppose you would call a three-quarter bred mare—a hunter mare.

6915. What do the farmers about you breed?—Till I introduced the thoroughbred stallions they bred a most miserable class of mare, and they have been breeding from that. There are a few better class mares going now.

6916. What kind of stallions were there there before you introduced your thoroughbreds?—It would be hard to say how they were bred. My own experience of what we call half-breds is that they are the most abominable brutes to breed from. "Curzon," who ran and was placed in the Derby is supposed to be a half-bred, so that it is a large term. Half-breds in my district are the most abominable brutes. There was a man in my neighbourhood tried two; they were both supposed to be got by a thoroughbred out of fairly well-bred mares, but I am glad to say he has gelded them both. He did a good deal of service with them at first, and did a lot of harm. The gets of one of them were all bad-tempered—wretched creatures altogether—in heart; then he gelded him; then he tried another, and I am thankful to say he gelded him also.

6917. Are you situated in a congested district?—No; I wish I were.

6918. That seems odd; why?—Because I could then get the service of some of the Hackney stallions.

6919. But you are near a congested district?—Not far away; Schull is the nearest, about fourteen miles from me.

6920. Are you acquainted with the stock got by Congested Districts Board stallions?—No, I cannot say that I am; they have been there such a short time—only two years.

6921. Would you use a Hackney stallion if you had access to him?—If I could get at a good Hackney I would put him to several mares. I would not breed from them otherwise.

6922. Why don't you in that case substitute a Hackney for one of your thoroughbreds?—If I could pick one up I would, but they are very expensive—high-class Hackneys. I don't like a low-class, but high-class, such as you see at Mr. Burdett-Coutts's, or Sir Walter Gilbey's, or the London show. Anyone who admires a horse must admire them; they have bone and substance and pluck, and are eager for work. I think they are magnificent horses.

6923. Do you think a Hackney is suitable to get hunters?—Oh, no; you must have blood on the top and blood all through, but you cannot grow hunters in all parts of Ireland.

6924. In your part?—I have been doing my best feeding them with oats since they were foals, and have never grown a really high-class horse yet.

6925. What do you think your district is suitable to produce?—I would like to try the Hackney; from what I have known of them they are a really good horse.

6926. What class of horse would you expect to get?—A saleable horse, with action, for harness purposes; you might get good hacks too. I have been going to fairs for a good many years, and my experience is, that you can sell anything with action no matter if it is not big; whereas these weedy light horses at the present moment are almost unsaleable, whether it is because of bicycles or what, they certainly don't pay to breed.

6927. You would think your district more suitable to breed horses exclusively for harness?—Let people who have the desire try the other too. I would like to see the Hackney as well. I would leave the farmers to try whichever they liked. I would encourage both. I think the Royal Dublin Society does a good thing in encouraging a good class of thoroughbreds.

6928. Have you ever seen the Hackney produce crossed?—I have at present myself what I suppose you might call that class of horse, and he is a good horse. I got him from Yorkshire under the impression that he was a pure-bred Hackney, but I found out afterwards he was not, so I gelded him. I have been working him since, and have found him a most useful horse, a capital horse, unpleasant, no doubt, to ride, but charming in a trap, and draws a common cart with sand and manure; he jolts you to pieces when riding.

6929. How old is he?—Four off; I could have sold him several times; he is a capital good horse and I don't think a bit soft. Of course we have not very long distances in my district. I am eight miles from the railway and he will go there and come back as game as he goes.

6930. He is not quite pure-bred?—No; I understood he was. I bought him from an Irish doctor who went over to Yorkshire, and when I found he was not a pure bred I would not keep him as a stallion.

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Captain Townshend.

6931. Do you know enough about Hackneys to know that the thoroughbred Hackney is a valuable horse which the half-bred is not?—The only Hackneys I ever knew were good horses, pure-bred. My poor father, who used to drive a coach, brought over a couple of animals—one was a leader and the other a wheeler; they were magnificent horses. He paid £150 for one and £120 for the other; they were very handsome horses. I did not know what they were until I took to going to shows in England and saw this type reproduced exactly; we knew nothing about Hackneys.

6932. They were pure-bred?—I don't know at all; he bought them from a dealer; we sent one to Mr. Harris's—he keeps stallions at Kilmallock—and he said he was a Suffolk Punch, but he wasn't an atom like a Suffolk Punch; I am sure he was pure or nearly pure.

6933. How do the farmers treat their young stock about you—do they treat them well?—No, I don't think they do. One farmer, a rich man, bred from the first stallion I got, "Controversy," and I think he regularly starved the wretched foal to death. I saw it in a field as bare as this table for months; it grew thinner and thinner, and at last he got alarmed about it and gave it oats, and consequently it died; but there is no doubt he regularly murdered the animal. I think now, however, they are beginning to realize that if they breed well-bred stock they must take better care of them.

6934. Where do they sell their horses?—At Ballyboy principally; there is a good fair at Bandon also, and dealers are beginning to come to it.

6935. Are ponies as good as they used to be?—I don't think they are good now.

6936. Do you think that generally your part of the country is capable of producing a high-class hunter or carriage horse with any kind of stallion?—I don't think we can produce a high-class horse on our soil; everything is small, the cattle are small. There is a friend of mine who breeds horses in the King's County. He never feeds his young stock at all, and he produces some grand, magnificent, weight-carrying horses; if I was on limestone I would breed as poor as I could.

6937. Are there any ponies in that part of the country?—A few, but they are increasing; the poor people prize them more than they used to.

6938. But there is no indigenous breed—no native breed?—No, I don't think so.

6939. Lord Rathdonnell.—What stallions did you keep—what were their names?—"Controversy" was the first, "Beaucourt" and "Townmoor," that I got last year; "Beaucourt" is breeding well.

6940. Do their lists fill?—Well, "Beaucourt" was a good deal crabbed by opposition stallion owners, but he is getting so well that I fancy if he lives he will pay. At our show we had four first prizes out of our towns, belonging to the Royal Dublin Society, and his gets took three first prizes out of a possible four.

6941. I think you said the mares had improved since you imported thoroughbred stallions?—They have, certainly; they are breeding from some of them.

6942. If you approve of a Hackney stallion, why have you not imported one?—They are so awfully expensive horses to buy, I could not afford to, and I am not going to get a bad looking brute.

6943. I suppose the thoroughbreds you get are of a cheaper class?—You can get thoroughbreds much cheaper than the Hackney, there are so many more of them.

6944. And there is some difference in their size, bone, and shape?—Oh, of course there is.

6945. Have yours got great bone and size?—Yes, "Beaucourt," the one getting well. I never saw a horse of his size with better bone and back.

6946. What size is he?—Supposed to be 15.3, but he is not quite so much; he has got good bone, huge knees, and huge hocks. I don't think I have ever seen a better horse behind a saddle, and I have visited a good many good studs in England.

6947. You say the soil in your neighbourhood is not adapted for horse-breeding?—It is very hard to breed a high-class horse. I would not touch horses at all only I am so fond of them; they are not a paying game.

6948. Is there any limestone in your district?—Absolutely none, not nearer than Cork, and Cork is fifty miles from me.

6949. How do you expect to increase the bone?—It is a very open question; by going and getting the best horse I can lay hands on, I may increase it in that way.

6950. Without the lime, the bone-forming soil?—Of course. I have no limestone. There is a farmer near me who has improved his land very much. He has grown some fairly good foals, and got £60 at Bandon for a four-year old. He thought it paid him, and was very pleased. I don't think it would pay me the way I feed my colts.

6951. Sir Thomas Esmonde.—Did you say there were a sufficient number of stallions with you?—I think there are too many.

6952. Of good stallions?—I think we have very few good stallions.

6953. Most are of an inferior description?—Awful brutes. One witness said he thought a half-bred stallion bred better. I think that is only because, as a rule, they work them. There are a few good enough. I think most stallions are kept in a most unnatural way—pampered up and kept in hot stables. I think that is the only reason. I think a well-bred horse would breed just as well, and with more vigour.

6954. What do they charge for the service of these beasts?—It is hard to say. They have nominal fees, but they take anything down even to 5*s*., and that tempts these farmers.

6955. I suppose the farmers go to the cheapest horse?—Generally. Last year a good many came to "Townmoor" because he is a big, upstanding, fine looking horse. I made no reduction in his advertised fee of 3 guineas. A good many of the strong farmers would pay a good fee.

6956. If they had a suitable horse?—I think so.

6957. You think the reason they go to these bad horses is because they have not got much choice?—A great many of the small farmers would unless they got stallions under the Royal Dublin Society scheme; unless they got him cheaper they would go to an inferior horse.

6958. Mr. Carew.—What recommendation would you make to get rid of the bad sires?—I have always been a believer in the theory, though it is against my own interests to say so, that no private individual should keep stallions, but that we should have Government studs.

6959. Would you be in favour of every owner of a stallion taking out a license?—I dare say that would be a good plan—anything to reduce the brutes. There any amount of "Young Yorks" in my neighbourhood—such awful brutes. "York" stood one year as a Royal Dublin Society horse—the first horse that came down to my neighbourhood, we have been so very backward until the last few years. The Royal Dublin Society only gave one grant for Cork; the famous horse-breeding county, North Cork, got the advantage of this, and we had none for West Cork until I represented how hard that was, and they then generously gave us a grant for West Cork, and I hope it will do good. The foals certainly are good, but whether they will turn out with bone remains to be seen.

6960. Do you charge the same for all classes of mares, half-bred and thoroughbreds?— There are practically no thoroughbreds in that part of the country

6961. "Townmoor" is by "Doncaster"?—Yes, by "Doncaster," out of "Euxine."

6962. "Controversy," is the winner of the Lincoln Handicap?—Yes.

6963. Have you got him still?—No; he died, I am sorry to say.

6964. Mr. WRENCH.—Is horse-breeding a considerable industry among the small farmers?—Yes, most have a mare they like to breed from.

6965. You know a good part of West Cork in addition to your own district?—Yes, pretty well.

6966. Do you think there would be any use in the people there trying to breed hunters?—I don't think so; it would be waste of time; they would grow things that would jump, but could not gallop; they would be as slow as possible. Any horse can jump. You can teach a Clydesdale to jump. I have seen one a capital jumper, but they cannot gallop or stay.

6967. Do you think it would pay them better to breed horses with action?—Decidedly; because, as I said before, my experience in a fair is that at once you see a horse with action picked up, and the action of the Hackney is good knee action and hock action, it looks so well.

6968. You have not seen much of the produce of the Congested Districts Board stallions there?—No, I have not. I tried to buy one. I wrote to a man living there who thinks very highly of them, and who is a capable judge of horses, to try and buy a match for this Hackney I spoke of that I have.

6969. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Mr. Wrench asked you whether the small farmers made horse-breeding an industry in that part of the country. I want to know what your idea of an industry is?—Help to pay their way in keeping the horse and paying rent.

6970. You mean to say they breed for sale?—As well as for their own use. Most of the farmers nearly always sell the horse. For instance, the other day I wanted a working horse, and troops of these brutes were brought up for me to see; it got about the country that I wanted one; they generally keep them until they get a market. I think the Hackney would get a good general horse for them.

6971. From your evidence I should suppose your district was not a natural horse-breeding country, and you could scarcely call it an industry?—I think most of the farmers about breed horses.

6972. They breed because they have got mares, is that it?—They have got a mare and they don't feel the colt growing up as they say just to sell.

6973. What age do they sell at?—I have never seen them bought as foals, as one of the witnesses said. I have never seen any market for foals.

6974. What do they do with them?—Work them until they are two off or three, and if they turn out any good and have another young one coming they will sell them.

6975. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything you would like to suggest to the Commission?—I would do anything, I think, to get rid, if one could, of these ugly brutes called half-bred horses that are getting so badly, and then if they could have any way of giving premiums to those who get well it would be a good thing. Somebody once remarked that giving premiums to stallions without knowing what they would get is like giving a prize to a racehorse in the saddling paddock. I know a horse—of course it is invidious to mention names, and I won't do it—he was a thoroughbred sold from England because he was getting light; he was bought by a man and brought to Ireland, and his gets are light; he is one of the Royal Dublin Society's registered horses, but it was a bad reason to bring him to Ireland when he was too light for England; he will have nothing to do in a few years.

6976. You say you think private ownership of stallions ought not to be allowed to exist—that they ought to be kept by the Government?—Yes, if well done, because it would be much better for the country; the Government could afford to give a higher price. There is a very good horse, at least I believe he is—"Royal Meath"—being brought to Bandon by Sir John Arnott, who bought the Duke of Devonshire's property; if he doesn't get well no thoroughbred will get well. Of course Bandon is nearer Cork, and there is a better chance of the hunter there I think a great deal of the agitation against the Hackney is that they know nothing about him. They got up a memorial in the County Club at Cork, and half those who signed it knew nothing at all about Hackneys—never attended a London show.

6977 There is no possibility of judging the produce of them in Ireland?—No; they have been here too short a time—they seem so popular in England and bring such large prices. I think it was 3,000 guineas Sir Walter Gilbey told me he refused for a two-year old last year at the show.

6978. Have you anything further to say?—I might just mention an incident that struck me last March at Tattersall's. I saw a good Hackney, I don't know if he was pure-bred, and thought he would make a good match for this horse I have. A great many horses were being sold at from £15 to £20, and I thought I would get this one for £25, as he didn't show half the quality of these light animals. He was not in the ring for two minutes when he was knocked down at 60 guineas. They are valuable from their good straight action and substance. He was not more than 15 hands, and if got by a thoroughbred would have gone for about 15 guineas, because he was small.

Mr. R. MALONE, V.S., Wexford, examined.

6979. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Malone, you are a veterinary surgeon?—Yes.

6980. Living in Wexford?—Yes, Wexford town.

6981. Have you had any experience as regards horse-breeding personally, I mean not professionally; do you breed at all yourself?—Yes, I breed a good deal from thoroughbreds.

6982. Are many horses bred in your neighbourhood?—A great many. I think Wexford is about the largest horse-breeding county in Ireland.

6983. What class of horses do they breed?—Half-breds, and high class thoroughbreds.

6984. What do they aim at—to get hunters?—To get hunters, high class harness horses, and polo ponies.

6985. The polo pony I suppose is a matter of chance?—A matter of chance, yes; but some go in for it specially by a small thoroughbred horse crossing with Connemara ponies.

6986. What is the kind of mare the farmers in the county generally have?—A small mare, generally about 15.1; short legged, thick, with a good deal of quality.

6987. What kind of sires do they use?—Thoroughbred sires with strong bone; big thick horses.

6988. Is the county well supplied with thoroughbreds of that kind?—We are rather short of thoroughbred horses now.

6989. Are there any half-bred horses in the county?—A few half-breds, but a great many mongrel horses, underbred horses.

6990. Bred anyhow?—Bred anyhow.

6991. Are there any cart horse sires?—Very few; one or two, perhaps three, that is, thoroughbred cart horses, Shire horses, and Clydesdales.

6992. Are they patronised much?—Not in latter years at all.

6993. Do you think the demand for hunters and high class carriage horses is as great as it used to be?—I think it is more so than ever it was.

6994. Is the supply as good as it used to be?—We cannot get them.

6995. You mean the supply is less than it was formerly?—There are too many looking for them.

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Mr. R. Malone, V.S.

Northerns come down to Enniscorthy fair and buy all the yearlings and two year olds. They buy a string of forty. I do not believe a good horse was ever bred in the North of Ireland.

6996. Does your county produce as many of that class of horse as it used to?—Yes, they are all bought at a year or two years old. Mr. Brown, of Doncaster, the best buyer of young horses in England, paid £50 for a two-year-old, and £65 for a three-year-old.

6997. At what age are they sold?—A good many of the small farmers sell at a year and two years old.

6998. Does the price keep up?—There is a good price still for a good two-year-old, or a good yearling, if he is a shapely colt, and has good bone. It is only this week I saw a gentleman, Mr. Topham, give a hundred guineas for a four-year-old only six weeks in training.

6999. These yearlings and two-year-olds that are bought, where do they go to?—To the North of Ireland generally.

7000. Kept there and sold again?—I think the men that come to Wexford resell them to the farmers up there, and they are kept there till they are four or five years old.

7001. It pays your farmers better to sell them young?—Some of the farmers keep them till four years old, and break them and hunt them.

7002. In your opinion, are the thoroughbred sires in the county suitable—sound, and so on?—Any horses there that are on the register are sound, and they are suitable, shapely, good horses.

7003. Have you got a stallion of your own?—The last horse I had I lost him. I have a half-bred sire now and a Yorkshire coach horse. One time I had five thoroughbred sires.

7004. Why did you discontinue keeping them?—I was offered a good price for them and sold them.

7005. Are these young horses generally sold at the fairs or picked up by dealers?—There are a good many going round the country looking for them. A great many men, farmers themselves, buy them at two years old, keep them and hunt them, then sell them.

7006. What is the character of the soil generally in the county?—Limestone.

7007. You consider it a very suitable country for breeding horses?—I do.

7008. Do you consider hunters and high-class carriage horses the most profitable kind of horses to breed there?—I do.

7009. How long have you been in Wexford?—All my lifetime. I was born in Wexford.

7010. How long have you been practising?—Twenty years.

7011. In your opinion, are the horses produced in the country deteriorating at all in soundness?—No; I think the horses at the present time are very sound.

7012. As good as ever they were?—As good as ever they were.

7013. Are the farmers inclined to sell their best mares, or do they see the advantage of keeping them?—Well, they are beginning to keep them now, under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

7014. You think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has worked well?—I do. It is an excellent scheme, but it wants more advertising. The farmers do not know enough about it yet.

7015. You approve of the system?—I do.

7016. Have you any opinion as to the desirability of licensing or registering sires?—I think the registration that is going on at the present time is first class; quite sufficient. It is working well in the County Wexford.

7017. Do you think any system of registering mares would be beneficial?—I would sooner go back to the old scheme in that direction. I would sooner give nominations to the mares. Instead of giving a few premiums I would give up to forty or fifty, because, when farmers bring their mares a few will get prizes, and farmers do not like to go the following year because they might meet the same mares again.

7018. Are many horses bred for harness purposes in your district?—A good many. We used to have a good man coming down to Wexford to buy horses, Mr. Shiels; he used to buy for East of London.

7019. Are they bred specially, or are they horses that do not turn out quite good enough for hunters?—That is it; horses that do not turn out quite good enough for hunters.

7020. Are many horses bought for the Army?—A great many, Widger buys a whole lot.

7021. Lord RATHDONNELL.—With regard to supply and demand for horse flesh in your district, do you mean to say the supply is not equal to the demand?—It is not.

7022. You do not mean to say there are less good horses bred?—I do not. There are as many good horses bred there as ever, and the farmers are anxious to do so still.

7023. You say there are several half-bred horses in Wexford; what do you mean by half-bred?—Horses got by a thoroughbred horse out of a three-quarter bred mare or half-bred mare. Some of them produce very good stock.

7024.—What sort of stamp are they?—A good big horse, about sixteen hands, with quality, standing on straight good legs, good back and thighs, and quarters. We had one very good half-bred sire in the County Wexford, Milo, a chestnut horse. He produced a whole host of good horses; he even produced some race-horses

7025. What sort of breeding was he?—They say by a Suffolk Punch out of a pure thoroughbred mare. I only heard that in tracing it a little bit, everything he produced was really first class.

7026. Then, there are other classes of half-bred sires in the county which you seem to disapprove of; how are they bred?—God knows how they are bred; they are bred and re-bred, and you would not know how they are bred.

7027. You also said you had a Yorkshire coach horse sire?—I bought a Yorkshire coach horse about five years ago in York from Pickering.

7028. What sort of produce had he?—He is producing good stock crossed with small mares.

7029. I think you said you sold him?—No, I have the Yorkshire coach horse still; I sold some thoroughbreds I had.

7030. Lord ASHTOWN.—What made you think of getting a Yorkshire coach horse?—I thought he would be a good cross with the mares in our part to produce mares to breed again from.

7031. What is the general class of mares in your district?—A good class of short-legged thick mares.

7032. Do they want bone?—They have good bone. There are a great many mares bred by old Connemara ponies, some of the best brood mares we ever had.

7033. Do the farmers keep the fillies by the Yorkshire coach horse?—Yes, to breed from them again.

7034. You do not like the general half-bred horse?—I do not, I like a half-bred by a thoroughbred sire out of a three-quarter-bred or half-bred mare.

7035. Would you approve of their being registered by the Royal Dublin Society?—Not until I see what stock they produce.

7036. You would sooner register some pure breed like a Cleveland Bay or a Yorkshire coach horse; Would you register any other breed but the thoroughbred?—I would register half-bred sires if I knew they were producing good stock.

7037. You would not register any pure breed?—I would, of course.

7038. Well, you may call the Yorkshire coach horse and the Hackney a pure breed?—I believe they have a stud book of their own.

7039. You would be in favour of registering these?—Yes.

7040. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—What class of horses is produced in the County Wexford?—Mostly hunters, harness horses, and polo ponies.

7041. Is there a large trade done in these three classes?—A very large trade. There is a good demand for hunters and ponies, in fact I never saw the demand so great.

7042. Which class of horses finds the most ready sale in Wexford?—Hunters.

7043. Which are the principal fairs?—Enniscorthy is the principal one.

7044. And is this fair attended by foreign dealers?—It is; in fact it is a great fair. I think they come from all parts of England and Ireland to Enniscorthy, and of course the Northerns come down there to every fair; they buy all their good horses there.

7045. These horses, I presume, would be bred in the county?—In the county.

7046. What have you to say about the sires in the county?—We want a few more good thoroughbred sires in the county with plenty of bone and quality.

7047. What price would you suggest these sires should be given at?—£2; you won't get more.

7048. Would that be about the average price paid now?—I do not think you would get more than £2; I think the farmers will not give more for any sire.

7049. Apart from thoroughbred horses, what kind of stallions are there in County Wexford now?—A few half breeds, and other breeds; a few Shire horses, and I do not think they are pure bred; a few Clydesdale horses, and a lot of others.

7050. Nondescripts?—Yes; I have seen as many as forty stallions in Taghmon on a fair day.

7051.—What price would these stallions be at?—From a glass of whiskey to five shillings, and perhaps nothing at all but a shake hands.

7052. So Wexford is a great horse breeding county?—It is.

7053. For the size of it. And what have you to say about the brood mares in Wexford?—They are pretty good. They are rather small, but I have seen small produce from good and big horses.

7054. You spoke of Connemara ponies for producing good mares, do you know how they are bred?—I have not the least idea. Tinkers used to bring them down in droves to Wexford years ago, and sold them as three-year-old ponies there, and got £6 or £7 apiece for them. They would sell them as ponies. They go to 14.1 or 14.3; real good ones.

7055. Some of these produce good mares?—I have known Connemara ponies to produce horses that sold at £40 or £50 apiece, by old "Lawyer."

7056. You say the foreign dealers also attended Enniscorthy fair, what class of horses would they buy?—High-class hunters and high-class harness horses; always a good quality hack.

7057. Are there any army remounts bought in Wexford?—Lots of them. Mr. Widger buys a lot.

7058. What price does he give for them?—Up to £40 for a good trooper.

7059. That is for the English Government?—Yes.

7060. Do any foreign dealers buy for Foreign Governments?—The Danish Government, I think, buys a lot. The class of horses they buy are rather small; fifteen hands; a bulky horse.

7061. The Home Government buys a larger number of remounts?—Yes, a whole lot.

7062. Have you any experience of the old Irish mare we have heard a great deal about?—No, I do not understand how she is bred.

7063. You think she is not to be found?—I do not think she is.

7064. Not in Wexford?—Well, if I knew what she is like, but I never heard the old Irish mare described.

7065. Have you any plan for improving the breed of horses in Wexford?—The best plan, I think, would be to go back to the old scheme of giving nominations for mares.

7066. You think the old scheme of the Royal Dublin Society is better than the present one?—I think it is. You would have lots more mares shown. Advertise the scheme well. Lots of farmers after putting their mares to mongrel sires thought they had nothing to do but to go and get a prize for the mares, and it was only then they found out their mistake. They do not know anything about the scheme.

7067. You think if the scheme was more widely advertised it would be productive of more good?—I am quite sure of it.

7068. You say there are sufficient good brood mares in the county?—A good many of the farmers are beginning to get them now.

7069. What would you say to the system of the Hunters' Registration Society; would that be applicable in Wexford?—You mean to have a registration book for hunters? Yes, I think it would.

7070. Do you think it would encourage the keeping of good brood mares in the county?—It would.

7071. Mr. CAREW—You say there are a lot of mongrel sires in the County Wexford?—Yes.

7072. Would you approve of insisting on every owner taking out a licence to keep a sire?—Yes.

7073. That would reduce them?—Yes.

7074. That, in addition to the registration, would come to a sound stock?—Yes.

7075. Wexford enjoys a high reputation as a breeding county?—Yes, I believe it does.

7076. That is from mating half-bred mares with thoroughbred sires?—Yes.

7077. And a good number of the misfits turn out well as harness horses?—Yes.

7078. Dublin trades largely for harness horses with Wexford?—It does.

7078A. You know the Wexford harness horse enjoys a high reputation?—It does.

7079. Have you any experience of breeding from a Hackney sire?—Yes; I have bred from a few Hackneys.

7080. With what result?—The very worst.

7081. You disapprove of the Hackney?—They are frightful brutes. I gave a very fashionable Hackney stallion one of the best trials in the world.

7082. And the result was disappointing?—I bought a pony in Enniscorthy, which came from Connemara. I never sat behind anything like her; she was a fine goer. I could drive her a hundred miles. I sold her for sixty guineas.

7083. A pure Connemara breed?—Yes. The man I sold her to sold her for eighty guineas a fortnight after, and he bought her back for a hundred guineas. She met with a bad accident, and he asked me what he would do. I told him to send her to a fashionable Hackney sire, and I was so fond of her that I gave a fabulous price, nearly the price of ten horses.

7084. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—What is the price of the yearling?—I would be ashamed to tell you what I paid for it. I kept him for three years and a half. I drove him out to a place three miles away, and on the road I thought he was sick, and I left him at a farmer's house. I gave him another chance. He used to tire out on the road and knock up, you might beat him with the butt end of the whip. I sold him in Enniscorthy two fairs ago for £10.

7085. Mr. CAREW—You are of opinion that the introduction of a Hackney sire would injure the breed of horses in Wexford?—I do not know, but I swear it. I have been asking hundreds of people about it and they say they are no use. If your lordship would allow me, I was speaking to an English dealer, and had a letter from him which I would like to read.

7086. CHAIRMAN.—Who is it from?—From Mr. Topham, a large dealer in horses in Yorkshire, the gentleman who gave me the hundred guineas for the four-year-old mare.

7087. That is the Connemara?—No, a young horse he bought in Wexford. I asked his opinion about Hackney sires in Yorkshire. I wrote to him asking

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him what he thought of the Hackney, and if your lordship will allow me I will read the letter I got from him.

7088. There is no objection to your reading it.

"15, East Mount-road,
"York, 20. 9. 96.

"DEAR MR. MALONE,—In answer to your inquiry *re* importation of Hackney sires into Ireland, judging from what I see in Yorkshire, it would completely destroy the value and character of the Irish hunter. When the Hackney boom arose some ten or twelve years ago, every man put his mare to a Hackney sire, and the consequence is that we are now flooded with a lot of common, under-sized horses of very small value, and only fit to drag a parcel cart, while our fine Yorkshire hunters and harness horses have practically disappeared. Living in a Hackney district I have had many opportunities of seeing Hackney crossed with other breeds, rarely with success. He seems to possess the power of transmitting all his own undesirable properties and want of size only. As a hunter cross it has been a decided failure here. I have often known a horse so bred to be good timber jumpers, but never to stay. Why do you want to cross your hunter mares? There is no competition. Scarcely any hunters are bred in England now. The game is in your own hands. Stick to your short-legged, thick, thoroughbred sires, and you will continue to have the finest breed of horses in the world.

"Yours faithfully,
"ARTHUR TOPHAM."

7089. That letter was written after you had tried the experiment you were speaking about?—Oh, yes, I bought a Hackney too from the late Edward M'Donnell, of Ashtown. He was a dealer in horses. I gave him sixty guineas for it. It was a very bad breed too—no stability about it.

7090. Do you know how it was bred?—He bought it in England the time of the great boom in Hackneys. I think it will ruin this country if you bring Hackneys into it. We are purely and simply the best hunter breeding people in the world, and if you allow a horse to come into the country that has no stability and no staying power, our trade is gone.

7091. Mr. CAREW.—The Hackney is brought in not as a hunter, but for harness purposes?—I do not think he is a harness horse at all; I think he is a dung cart horse. He is a horse slapping his legs against the ground; he is a good horse to drive from one theatre to another.

7092. Mr. WRENCH.—You say your Yorkshire coach horse is getting good stock?—Yes.

7093. Are his produce selling well?—Yes, I could sell the present horse to Mr. Widger. He bought a lot of the stock.

7094. They are selling at a good price?—Yes.

7095. As well as the animals got by the thoroughbred stallion?—Oh, no.

7096. They have good action?—Fair, nice, graceful action.

7097. Selling at a fair price?—Yes.

7098. You bought him at Pickering; who did you buy him from?—From Stericker Brothers.

7099. What is the name of the horse?—Ingmanthorpe Fashion; they call them after the place where they were bred.

7100. You mentioned having used a Hackney on one occasion; what horse was that?—I would not like to mention his name, but if you wish I will hand it in.

7101. Did he stand in the County Wexford?—No. He is a well known Hackney.

7102. I would like his name handed in, I do not want it for any public purpose.

(Witness handed in the name)

7103. Is Mr. Topham a large dealer?—He is one of the largest dealers. He has a house in Dublin now, to buy all his horses in Ireland.

7104. He has opened an Irish branch?—No, he has only come here to buy horses for his English trade. Of course I am not prejudiced against any breed of horse, but I would not like to see our county go back in horse-breeding.

7105. Do you approve of registering stallions?—Half-bred stallions, if I knew they were producing good stock.

7106. You would approve of registering them as well as thoroughbreds?—If they were producing good stock.

7107. Would you be in favour of having a Hunters' Improvement Society in Ireland?—I would.

7108. Do you think it would add to the value of horses if their pedigree could be certified?—If they could be certified and trusted.

7109. You think that would put up their value?—I think it would.

7110. Would you register all brood mares in the country?—I would register the good sound mares: not every mare.

7111. Do you think the farmers are parting with their good mares at all now?—They are not now. They are keeping them now But if you go back to the old scheme, I think it would do more good.

7112. CHAIRMAN. Are there generally large holdings about your part, or small?—A good many large holdings and a good many small too.

7113. Do the small farmers breed also?—They do; and do them well too. They look forward to breeding a hunter; that is the great object.

7114. You think the small farmer is as capable of breeding a hunter as the larger man?—I do. I think they take better care of them. They take care of them like a child. A small farmer got a hundred guineas for two of them, two-year-olds, a short time since.

7115. How are the polo ponies bred generally?—Out of the Connemara ponies by small thoroughbred horses.

7116. I suppose the production of the polo pony is a matter of chance?—A great many go in for them as a specialty now.

7117. Are they fairly successful in that?—Yes, they will get forty-five or fifty guineas for a good polo pony.

7118. Is it not a matter of chance whether it turns out a good polo pony?—If you get a good made pony, mated with a good small thoroughbred horse, the result is sure to be a good polo pony.

7119. Do these Connemara ponies come in every year?—They do. Tinkers bring them down there from Connemara. They are not selling so well for the last two or three years.

7120. Have you seen any you know that were the produce of Hackney sires?—I could tell them the very minute I saw them; little pudgy foals with upright pasterns.

7121. Have you seen any?—They bring them in to Wexford and sell them on the quay. They bring them down as foals.

7122. Would you have any objection to that?—I think it would ruin the country; getting them in and making brood mares of them by and by. The result would be that we would have Hackney blood there.

7123. You say a mixture of blood, other than a thoroughbred such as a Yorkshire coach horse, might be beneficial?—Yes.

7124. But you think in all cases the introduction of the Hackney blood would be detrimental?—I do. I do not care very much about very large bone in a hunter either. I like a horse with medium bone that stands straight on his legs. The bone in a thoroughbred horse is a good deal heavier than in the cart horse or the Hackney. You may have a larger bone to look at but it is all cancellated tissue, whereas you have condensed ivory in the thoroughbred horse.

7125. Are you acquainted with any parts of the country where the farmers aim principally at breeding harness horses, and not so much hunters?—I do not think there is any part of Ireland where they breed exclusively for harness horses.

7126. Not exclusively; but in the north don't they

principally?—They do, but I never remember having seen a good horse bred in the North of Ireland.

7127. Do you think hereditary disease is as prevalent as it used to be?—I believe there are not so many unsound horses now as formerly.

7128. How do you account for that?—The farmers are paying more attention. They feed them. They treat the young stock well and feed them well.

7129. Mr. WRENCH.—I do not want you to tell me the name of the stallion, but do you know that the Hackney stallion you alluded to is a Norfolk Hackney?—They nearly all come from Norfolk.

7130. You know, don't you, that there are two distinct breeds of them?—Yes.

7131. This very horse was a Norfolk Hackney?—I do not know that, but is he not a Hackney?

7132. Yes, but there is a great difference?—They are all the one breed out of the one stud book.

7133. Did you ever own a horse called Stanley III.?—Yes.

7134. Was he a Hackney?—No, one of the best half-bred horses. I have him still.

7135. He is a bay horse?—Yes.

7136. Where did you buy him?—In Dublin.

7137. Does he breed good stock?—He does.

7138. Is his produce very good?—He is not long enough with me yet to know, but his two and three-year-olds are very promising.

7139. You have him five years?—No, I don't think I have.

7140. How long?—I daresay I might have him four years.

7141. Are his stock promising?—Yes, his two-year-olds and three-year-olds are very promising now.

7142. What fee do you charge for him?—Thirty shillings.

7143. Would you be surprised to hear that he was a Hackney?—I would be surprised, because I know he is not.

7144. If he is entered in the Hackney stud book by 3295, you would think that that is the wrong horse?—He is not in the stud book. My horse is by Monksman out of Sweetmeat by Carnival. He was bred in Wicklow.

7145. Then what is Stanley III.?—He is not my horse, my horse is Stanley I., Stanley One.

7146. He is a half-bred horse?—He is a beautiful horse by Monksman.

7147. What was his dam?—His dam was a half-bred mare, more than a half-bred mare.

7148. CHAIRMAN.—Anything you would like to suggest to the Commission?—The only suggestion I can make would be to give the nominations to the mares again, instead of giving the premiums, to give forty or fifty nominations, you would have a lot of mares, instead of having only four, or five, or six you would have forty mares; it would encourage the farmers more.

6149. That is to revert to the old system?—Yes.

Mr. T. COMERFORD, Ardavon, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow, examined.

7150. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Co. Wicklow?—Yes.

7151. What part?—Rathdrum, about eight miles from the town of Wicklow.

7152. Are you interested in breeding horses?—Yes. I am very fond of horses.

7153. Do you breed yourself?—I keep one brood mare now.

7154. What do you breed?—I try to breed hunters. She was a really good horse. I send her to the best thoroughbred I can find within distance. Some of them do not grow very large, but I got £130 for a four-year-old, that never saw hounds, at the last Horse Show in Dublin.

7155. Do you consider your part of the County Wicklow suitable for horse-breeding?—I think we should breed as good horses as they do in Wexford, but we have not got the material. Both the mares and stallions are inferior, especially the stallions.

7156. You think the soil and climate as good?—I do not see any difference really.

7157. The county is not properly supplied with suitable stallions?—No, in my district there are none, at least, not stallions I would——

7158. What are the stallions mostly in the county?—I have been obliged to send to Wexford and to Coolattin for my own mare. There were two horses there, "Torpedo" and "Zenophon."

7159. There is no thoroughbred horse near you?—No.

7160. Any half-breds?—There may be a horse or two that was bought simply on account of his cheapness, and brought in, I do not know the names, but they are not a suitable breed.

7161. Do not the farmers about you breed?—They do, several have brood mares, but several of the men in a position to breed the best horses are inclined to give it up because it is such a losing game. They have given the mares to bad sires, and the stock has been so bad that many have given it up.

7162. Would they pay for the service of a good horse?—I think they would, if we got a good, young, fresh horse, with good hunting action; I do not want a race horse. He would get fair carriage horses or hunters, and he would be largely patronised, provided the fee was not too big.

7163. Are there any cart stallions or Clydesdale or any of these kinds?—I have seen cart stallions going through the country but I do not know where they stand. I do not know much about them.

7164. Lord RATHDONNELL.—In your district it is very hilly?—It is very hilly but there are some nice sheltered valleys—low-lying farms.

7165. You have the sea on one side of you?—The sea is about eight miles from where I live.

7166. Would you put it down as a natural horse-breeding district?—Well, I have seen some splendid horses bred by the very sea. There were two very good horses bred on this farm I speak of. £250 was offered for them as four and five year olds.

7167. The farmer in the district is not naturally a man addicted to horse-breeding?—Well, I do not think their horse-breeding has been sufficiently successful to induce them to stick to it very much. But there is no reason, whatever, if we had good sires, why they should not take to it and breed successfully. They are fairly well off and able to take care of young horses well if they had the right sort.

7168. Is there any limestone soil in your district?—No, I do not think there is any limestone.

7169. Lord ASHTOWN.—The mares, are they good?—They are rather wanting in quality. Short-legged useful mares, they move fairly straight, and would be good nurses.

7170. The present class of mares you think would pay the farmers to breed from?—I think if these mares had a good thoroughbred horse with good hunting action they would produce good hunters or harness horses.

7171. You think it would pay the farmers to breed from them?—I do not think it would pay any farmer to breed a horse at less than £40 for a four-year-old horse.

7172. You think they would get that?—I think if they had a good stallion they would, but not with the present stallions.

7173. You would want a good stallion?—A good straight stallion, a good mover on the road as well

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Mr. T. Comerford.

as in the field. The horse I speak of would produce a good carriage horse or a hunter, but mainly for hunters.

7174. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—You think the stallions in your district are not good stallions?—The very worst I have had. There is no thoroughbred stallion in the district, and every year there are cheap stallions imported, which means ruin to any man who puts a mare to them.

7175. Are these stallions sound?—Very unsound, I believe.

7176. What is your opinion about breeding from an unsound stallion?—I think it is a ruinous game. They cannot be sold. They will not average more than about £20 apiece as four-year-olds, and very often they hang along, taken to fair after fair, and cannot be sold.

7177. You think a stallion should be examined, and not allowed to serve if not sound?—I think it would be in the interest of the public at large, to prevent unsound stallions from being put to stud purposes at all. A stallion to be advertised for stud purposes should be at least free from hereditary disease.

7178. Near you at Wicklow is not there a very large horse fair?—There is one horse fair in the year. An odd good colt comes in and there are a hundred buyers for him.

7179. Are there many foreign buyers at the Wicklow fairs?—Not so much at many of the fairs, but there are any number of buyers for a good horse.

7180. Which is the largest fair in Wicklow?—On the 12th August; there are fairs there quarterly, but they are not attended by buyers or horses much.

7181. In the other parts of the country are there horse fairs?—On the other side there is a horse fair in Castledermott, I do not know whether it is in Wicklow or Kildare.

7182. There are a good many horses produced in Wicklow?—Yes.

7183. A fair trade done in horses?—I do not know that it is a very profitable one.

7184. There are a good many horses?—Judging from Wicklow fair, there are a good many horses in the county.

7185. You think it could be made more profitable?—Yes, with one good stallion or two.

7186. What about the brood mares?—They are wanting in quality, and I would not expect to breed high-class horses from them at present, but they are sound, and move straight, and are good nurses, and I think they would breed good hunters.

7187. So that the horse-breeding industry in Wicklow is capable of extension?—Yes, and of great improvement. It is nearer to Dublin, and more convenient to dealers than Enniscorthy. There is no reason why we would not breed good horses if we had stallions.

7188. Mr. CAREW.—How was the horse you sold at the show for £130 bred?—By Zenophon, his dam by Lucky Star.

7189. Where does he stand?—At Coolattin.

7190. How many miles away?—About sixteen miles; but when I speak of farmers I do not think they like sending a horse away a long distance; they have to pay for grass.

7191. That is the only thoroughbred horse near you?—Mr. Thompson, of Newcastle, has a thoroughbred horse, "Buckmaster," but that is equally far. There was a horse at Roundwood called Glenart; he was a fairly good sire but he has left the country.

7192. The only thoroughbred sires near are at Coolattin and Newcastle?—I do not know of any others.

7193. How far is Torpedo from you?—He is at Ballinakil; that would be sixteen miles.

7194. You think the mares are quite good enough to breed from if you got the good thoroughbred sire you spoke of?—As a rule they are sound mares, move straight, and are good nurses. It is very hard to lay down any general rule; there are good ones and bad ones.

7195. There are a great many mongrel sires?—Yes; on account of the scarcity of stallions, these horses I speak of are bought for about £20.

7196. Are you in favour of licensing sires?—I would not allow any owner of a sire receive money for the service of a horse that had not a certificate from the Veterinary Department of the State that he was free from hereditary disease.

7197. You think every owner of a horse should take out a licence before keeping him?—Yes; and should not get a licence for any horse except a sound one.

7198. CHAIRMAN.—Anything else you would like to tell the Commission, Mr. Comerford?—Well, I would not like to see Hackney blood imported into the country where there was hunting stock.

7199. Why have you an opinion against the Hackney?—Because I have seen them: I don't wish to run them down as harness horses; I don't know anything about them as harness horses; they may be very showy and good, but as hunters their hind legs are behind them and their heads up in the air; their frame short and very meaty. I think it would be ruinous to the production of hunters to introduce the Hackney stallion.

7200. You mean you would be opposed to the introduction of the Hackney sire, or of the Hackney blood?—He has so many faults in him as a hunter, I do not mean to say a word against him as a harness horse. Personally I do not like him as a harness horse, but there are others who do; but as a hunter I think he would be of the worst description.

Mr. R. Giltrap.

Mr. R. GILTRAP, Elverstown, Blessington, examined.

7201. CHAIRMAN. You also live in the county Wicklow?—I live in Kildare, but quite near Wicklow, only about a mile from Blessington, on the border.

7202. Are you acquainted with the county Wicklow?—With the part of it that lies on that side of the mountain, just a belt of it up towards Baltinglass, I know it very well.

7203. That would be some distance from the district Mr. Comerford was speaking of?—Yes, the mountains lie between; but I have travelled that district too going to fairs, and I know it in a general way.

7204. Do you breed horses?—Yes, for the last twenty-six years I have bred from one to three foals every year. I have bought a good many horses too, and though I could make more that way than breeding, still I keep on breeding.

7205. What kind of mares do you breed from?—Every kind. Since I was fourteen years of age I have had experience of them. I was fond of horses, not only my own, but I would go for miles to look at a foal or mare, and my experience is that the best brood mare to breed weight-carrying hunters is always by a draught horse, I don't care what anybody says, but then I would like them off a well bred mare. When you breed them you get a really pure half-bred mare, as far as I know, and my experience is not very big or wide, but from what I saw myself, a half-bred mare, a mare by a thoroughbred horse, is as likely to breed weight as if you got a fine bony mare, with plenty of action, a good back, and a good neck and shoulder, I do not care what her pedigree is, and give her a good thoroughbred horse, it is the best chance for a hunter.

7206. That is the kind of mare you have bred from yourself?—Well, I have bred from every kind. Always nearly when I bred from a too high bred mare, a

mare that had two crosses, or even one by a thoroughbred horse, they have not been as good horses for me. The horse that makes the most money is the best for me. A dealer does not ask you when you get into the fair what your horse is by. He likes the horse that is sightly, with plenty of bone.

7207. What kind of stallion do you send your mares to?—Every kind. The best horse in the county was a draught horse; not a Clydesdale or a Shire horse, but a lump of a draught horse. All the farmers round me had plenty of money while he was in the county.

7208. What became of him?—He died. He lived up to twenty-two years of age. I was the first that took a foal out of him and the last. Richard Brown, of Blessington, bred him and had him. He was out of a fine looking mare, a half-bred. He was by a big horse that used to get first prize here at Ballsbridge, a horse belonging to Mr. Mooney, of Crumlin. Brown himself told me he got 140 mares a year for the last ten years.

7209. Sir T. ESMONDE.—What was his name?—"Sir William Wallace." He never left his own stable to get that many mares. He is by a horse that got first prize different times at Ballsbridge, "Sir Patrick Wallace."

7210. What is?—The draught horse; he has plenty of bone, a big brown horse.

7211. What class did this horse get the prize in?—I do not know; I did not go often to Ballsbridge then. I took an interest in this one on account of the horse in our neighbourhood. I saw him often under a cart of Mooney's, drawing manure, a fine looking horse with a great back and round ribs.

7212. And the produce of that horse, what were they sold as?—The best hunters in our country. I have it from different gentlemen. Some of the gentlemen here perhaps knew Mr. Arthur Owen. He lived quite near where this horse was, and I heard him say over and over that the best horses they ever had were by him. I had some myself, and got £60 and £70 for three-year-old colts by him, and John Boothman of Liffey Cottage, Blessington, got £80 for one, and I was offered £60 for one. Dr. G —— bought that mare from me, and the upshot of it was that when he died his widow sold her for 120 guineas.

7213. That was a mare by him?—It was not that one. No matter what way you breed a horse you will have exceptions, but in a general way all these horses were worth plenty of money, and you could sell them, young or old, at any age.

7214. When did that horse die?—About three years ago, I think. But then he was an exception. I do not put it down that every draught horse is able to do that. He bought a Clydesdale from England, and gave a fistful of money for him. I bred a few from him, and they were the worst horses I came across to drive or work; they were not fit for my plough, for our land is light and does not require that horse.

7215. Have you used a thoroughbred sire at all?—I have bred five by a thoroughbred for the one I bred by a draught horse, except this. I have them by "Heart of Oak," "FitzEdmund," and other horses. "Lurgan" was the best little horse ever in our country. He ruined nearly half the people that used him. He would have the best horses in the country. The man that owned him was simply broke by it, because his get won a few races, and the owner then bought them and bred them, and they ate him out. A lot of his produce were no good to sell; they were light and weedy, and you will not get a sale for a young horse, at two or three-year-old, in any fair if it is light and weedy. I sold the two best fillies as far as I could see myself in Frenchfurze, by Zenophon, for £22, at two years off. I bred one of them out of a mare I gave a big price for myself, simply to breed a foal. I sent her to Heart of Oak the first year, and she had a little filly foal. I sent her to Zingari and this was a big foal, but had round action.

7216. Have you used a Suffolk Punch?—There is not one that I know of in the country.

7217. Are there any half-bred stallions in your country?—Two or three, and they were the worst of all. What I call a half-bred horse is, we will say, out of a draught mare by a thoroughbred horse. Some call a half-bred horse a horse that has not any hair on him. I call them a good horse; but a half-bred horse bred from a Clydesdale by a thoroughbred horse, I think that is the worst sire you could get. There was one there by Hollywood, a splendid looking horse, and only for an accident he would have made a splendid hunter. A man named Lennon had him, and let him out to mares, a great many used him, I did not. There was nothing by him any good. There was a draught horse standing beside him in the same year, and the owner would get four mares for the draught horse for the one he would get for this one. The get did not pay.

7218. What are they sold for; hunters?—Our district breeds some of the best horses you would get. There are splendid good thoroughbred horses to select from in our part.

7219. What are they sold as?—For the one horse I sold to anyone in Ireland I sold ten to English dealers and Northmen. For instance, I don't suppose I would get anyone to buy those two fillies, I don't keep fillies, when I get a good colt I will stick to him.

7220. What do you and your neighbours aim at producing; is it hunters or harness horses?—We try to produce hunters, but we are very often disappointed if they are not the hunter. When middling farmers like we go in for too much breeding they run too light. If a horse is not able to carry something, what good is he?

7221. Has the Royal Dublin Society Scheme done any good in your district?—I think it has, because it is encouraging us anyway. I have a mare I was offered a nice price for. I do not suppose I would keep that mare if I did not think she would do some good.

7222. Do the prices keep up?—My experience is this: if you have a really good colt he is worth, perhaps, as much as ever he was; but if you have only a middling one he would not pay for half his keep. A horse that does not pay £10 a year will not pay you for keeping him.

7223. You buy horses too?—I got more into cattle these last four years, but before that I bought them.

7224. What age did you buy them at?—If I saw one I would fancy I would keep my eye on it until the man was going to sell it. It might be a year old or two years old.

7225. Mostly in your own country?—Yes, and in the fairs of Castledermott or Rathsallagh. The Furze is the best of the fairs. It rules the fairs in our district for young long-tailed horses. The Furze we call it, on the Curragh. You generally get as much for him there as anywhere. As for selling a horse to a gentleman, I hardly ever sell a horse to a gentleman, not ten out of fifty. I bring them to the fairs, and if they are good-looking horses I am not asked what they are by; if they can step off and have a rib and a good round shoulder, plenty bone, and sinew, and strength, I have twenty men to buy them. With regard to going in for pure-bred horses I know nothing about that. I would not take a present of a thoroughbred mare and breed off her, unless it might be with a draught horse.

7226. Lord ASHTOWN.—What sire do you recommend for your district?—I sent a mare I got second prize for to Delamont, because she was rather big; I don't like the horse at all.

7227. How was he bred?—I do not know; he was a pure thoroughbred.

7228. Take the ordinary farmer in your district. What sire would you recommend him to send to pay?—For the average of the colts that are bred the

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draught horse is paying far more at present than the thoroughbred horses. There is no doubt about it. What is it if I get £100 for a horse, that is only an exception. If I bred five others that won't pay me it takes more than the whole of that, that is my experience. I have never seen a farmer that stuck to thoroughbred horses—that bred from thoroughbred horses continually, without crossing with a draught horse—I never saw one of them but became poor. That is the reason I say they should use the draught horse sometimes. However, it is not horses altogether I live by. I am fond of them, but when I am taking stock in the beginning of the new year I never put down any of my horses as worth anything. If one is a good horse to-day he may be a bad horse to-morrow Whatever I make in the year by them I put it down in the latter end of the year.

7229. That is profit?—Well, it is. I put it down in that sort of way; because if you have a horse that you think a lot about you don't know when you go out into the field to-morrow something may not have happened. I had a beautiful colt that put his foot through a rough wire and left him not worth a pin.

7230. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE—What kind of mares do you breed from?—All kinds of mares. The best mare I ever had was one that died in Major Rynd's land. She was by the horse I told you of, and out of a Curraghmore mare, a mare we had for years. I got up to £60 for a three-year old from her, but they were dear at the time. This mare I sent to "Heart of Oak," and got a foal out of her at three years old. She missed next year and I put her to work. She worked well at ploughing and other work, and I sent her to him again. She had a filly foal that time. I sent her again, and I thought I was doing a great thing sending her to Major Rynd's good grass which was on the way to the place where the horse was standing. In the morning I got her dying of convulsions. I brought the foal home and petted it. I have it now, and was offered a big price for it. One colt she did breed. I used to ride him myself an odd time, and he was a good one.

7231. Do you approve of breeding from young mares?—I have bred from several two-year old fillies. I have a filly this year from "Heart of Oak" by "Zingari."

7232. All your breeding is from young mares practically?—No; we always keep a mare working and breeding. I would not keep any brood mare unless I knew it was something extraordinary. I get as much work out of a brood mare—work of a certain class—as if she had no foal.

7233. Have you any opinion as to whether breeding from young mares or old is better?—I think young mares are the best. If you breed from old mares you will find they are apt to have big hollows over the eyes. My father said this to me, and I watched it. You will find it is right. When they fail to feed themselves they fail to feed the foal, and the first year is the year to make a horse. I never saw a good foal that was starved in the beginning.

7234. Do you think the farmers take sufficient care of the young ones?—I never have a foal by a bred horse that I do not give a feed of oats every night. In the case of the draught horse foal I do not do that. I put him in a different place, and don't give him hay or oats, but you cannot expect a high bred horse to grow up on nothing. If you buy a Kerry bull it will live anywhere, but if you buy a beautiful shorthorn bull you must feed him well. People used to come and say to me "Our cattle are not growing like yours, how is that?" Well, we have only a poor place, but my father would be up at five in the morning feeding them and stuffing them, and if they don't pay for feeding them, it is a fact that they won't pay for starving them.

7235. Mr. CAREW.—You say the best brood mare is by a draught horse out of a well bred mare?—Not only that one, but I tried it on several occasions myself. You want to have bone; bone follows the sire. If you go to a draught horse with a bred mare he is too soft. I would like to have a thoroughbred sire with a mare with plenty of strength. I would not take a present of the produce of a thoroughbred horse with a Clydesdale mare. In my opinion you might as well expect a raven out of a wren's egg. But get a mare with proper hips and back, tidy and well made, and a good rein above all things. I have watched it, and watched it close, before there was talk about giving us premiums. I never saw a mare breeding well with a great big clumsy neck on her. Get a mare with the head square on, and a big neck under, and, perhaps, she is light above, I don't care what horse you go to, Favo, or the best horse on the Curragh, it is ten to one you will have a bad horse.

7236. Can you give an idea of the breed of draught horse you would select?—The draught horse I would like is one that some people would call a half-bred horse. I would like his dam to have had some breeding. If he was light in the shin he should have plenty of muscle on the arms, and muscle behind over the hocks. Go to a good pony horse with her, a horse with good round action. You may be disappointed, but you are most likely to have a good one from that. That would be the horse I would like to see coming into the country. I would send him the best mare I have.

7237. That is your description of the draught horse?—Yes, but not a pure draught horse. That is what I want to get at.

7238. Out of a well-bred mare?—I would not say too well bred.

7239. Some thoroughbred blood in the mare?—Yes, he won't work for you unless there is some blood in him. I have tried the big horses and bred them and bought them, and I never got one that I had any pleasure with. I trained several horses when a young lad with my father, I hated him to give me a young draught horse to train because they are harder to train. If you have a horse with a little breeding he will nearly do anything you bid him, with kindness; you will always have to wallop the other. I am decidedly in favour of breeding from two-year-old fillies I think a mare a little older would be better, but I think they breed very well. For instance, a sheep at two or three years old won't make as good a lamb for me as if she is four. If you give me a sheep with her teeth fair that she can eat, that is the sheep that will suckle a lamb and give you a fat one. If you put a mare to breed before her teeth are developed you cannot expect she will have the same amount of milk to give, or breed a foal as well as one that has got up in years. Some will breed from mares until they are twenty-five, more will drop off at fifteen. I would not say a mare at sixteen or seventeen or eighteen even was too old, but when they come to twenty I say they are.

7240. CHAIRMAN.—Do you consider the breeding of horses a profitable business in your part of the country?—Most unprofitable if you stick to the bred horse. I am decided on that, I tried it. If you breed a light filly at three years old it is hard to get £15 for it, and if it was an old draught one, worth nothing in a way, and bring it out you will get something, but bred horses are not fit for small farmers.

7241. Do the farmers about you look upon it as part of their regular farming business to breed horses?—Generally they have a brood mare, and there are a good many brood mares in our district. Anyone that was at the Naas show this year would see there were some as good three-year-old colts there as there was any need for as hunters.

7242. You think it pays them?—One gentleman said if he got £60 it would not pay him. If I get £40 for one at three years old, or £40 for one at four years old, I think I am well off.

7243. Can you suggest anything that would make it more profitable?—Send us a good draught horse. My idea about a thoroughbred horse I give it to you candidly. I think any man that it suits to use a

thoroughbred horse should be able to pay for him. I have been paying from £2 to £5 for a thoroughbred horse for the last twenty-five years, but the man that is not able to pay for the service of a thoroughbred horse does not want a thoroughbred foal. What is he going to do with it?—He will have to sell it as a two-year-old. He will hawk it from fair to fair. Everyone will praise it except the man who wants it, and no man wants it. Finally he will sell it for a few pounds. He is gratified that he is able to say the horse was by a thoroughbred, and that he had him. The dealer may make money by him. It is because there are not good draught horses in the country. The draught horses there are great long-legged brutes, with their shoulders straight up, that if you got on their back you are sitting straight over their forelegs.

7244. By a draught horse you do not mean the pure bred Cleveland or Clydesdale?—If you send a Clydesdale down to the country, and said, "use him as much as you like; here he is for nothing," I would not breed one foal off him; of course that is a prejudice.

7245. Lord RATHDONNELL.—We want to know the sort of horse you want?—I am not very well versed in horses; in this way, I would not be able to distinguish between a Suffolk Punch and a Clydesdale or a good draught horse. I imagine a Suffolk Punch is a good horse with great bone and sinew, and very little hair. If they have bone and substance and shape that is the kind of horse I want.

7246. Lord ASHTOWN.—You mean a horse practically with some thoroughbred blood, what is commonly called a half-bred horse?—I do not call him a half-bred horse. If you give a half-bred mare to a draught horse I would not like him

7247. But you would like rather a coarse half-bred mare to be put to the thoroughbred?—Yes, a good clean serviceable mare, perhaps it would be better for us we did not know anything about her pedigree.

7248. You would have a good serviceable mare put to the thoroughbred horse and that kept as sire?—Oh, no, I would not have the thoroughbred horse. I want the sire to be a draught horse, but the dam should have a little breeding, and if I want a brood mare I go about it the same way.

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7249. You do not want to have a thoroughbred direct at all, a first cross on either side?—If I wanted a thoroughbred horse I would have a thoroughbred horse out and out.

7250. Sir T. ESMONDE.—For this mare to get the sire you would like some thoroughbred blood in the mare?—I would, but I don't know whether they call them the Irish mares or Irish horses or not. I am like the dealers, and if I go into a fair and want a horse I don't want to know what he is bred by, a horse that pleases me, I don't care what he is by, if he has plenty of good bone and muscle; I do not care what he is by; and with a good round rib. You will not get a hardy horse with a flat rib. There was a gentleman here to-day who talked a lot about action. Some of the ugliest horses I have seen had grand action. You would get a horse to go beautifully, but they are no good to look at. That will not please the dealer. He wants a horse to look at. I for one would be glad to see a good lump of a draught horse sent down.

7251. Mr. CAREW.—What we want to find out is the sort of horse you want exactly?—Did any of you ever see a great horse Captain Davis had; Garibaldi was his name. There is the horse I would like. I gave him mares, and never had a foal from him. Still I liked him. He had none of your great quantity of hair about him. The Clydesdale horses have hair enough on their hocks without a tail at all. They are all hair and no use, except for a Scotchman to plough deep land and pull big carts of dung, but for a saleable horse they are no use I am quite sure.

The Commissioners adjourned to next day.

FOURTEENTH DAY—THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 1896.

Dec. 3, 1896.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, Mr. J. L. CAREW, M.P., Mr. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. RICHARD J. Moss examined.

Mr R J. Moss.

7252. CHAIRMAN.—You are the Registrar of the Royal Dublin Society, are you not?—I am.

7253. How long have you held that post?—I have held that post for nineteen years; I have been an officer of the Society for twenty-one years.

7254. Will you give the Commission shortly a sketch of the constitution and objects of the Society?—The Society was founded in 1731, it was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1751, a Supplemental Charter was granted in 1866, and a second Supplemental Charter in 1888. The objects for which the Society is incorporated are—"The advancement of Agriculture and other branches of Industry, and the advancement of Science and Art." The first Supplemental Charter constituted the Council the governing body of the Society, and directed that the general management and control over the affairs of the Society should be vested in, and exercised by, the Council exclusively. The second Supplemental Charter dissolved the Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland, and transferred its members and its property to the Royal Dublin Society. This Charter also re-organized the Council, and provided that it shall consist of the President, *ex-officio* officers to be added by By-law, and three Sections, each consisting of an equal number of members, the entire Council, excluding the President, not to exceed forty-five in number. The Sections are—an Agricultural Section, a Section for Science and its industrial applications, and a Section for the General Purposes of the Society. There are at present twelve members in each Section. The several branches of the Society's work are entrusted to Committees. There are three statutory Committees, corresponding to the Sections of the Council. The Committee of Agriculture consists of the Agricultural Section of the Council, together with twenty-one other Members; the Committee of Science consists of the Science Section of the Council and nine other Members; and the Committee of Industries, Art, and General Purposes consists of the General Purposes Section of the Council and nine other Members. The Council and the three Committees are elected by the Society at large. One-third of the Members of the Council, and all the Members of the Committees, retire annually and are eligible for re-election. For Horse Show purposes twenty Members are added to the Committee of Agriculture, making a total number on the Horse Show Committee of fifty-three Members.

On the 31st of December, 1895, there were 2,282 Members, and 470 Associates on the roll, and a considerable number have since joined the Society. While the greater number of Members and Associates

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are resident in Dublin and the adjoining counties, there is no county in Ireland without several representatives on the roll of Members. Twenty years ago the number of Members and Associates was 1,208; the increase has therefore been 127 per cent.

7255. What is the difference between a Member and an Associate?—A Member is entrusted with the power of voting—he has a vote for members of Council and members of Committees, and for the election of new members; an Associate is not given any such power, and his subscription is correspondingly less.

7256. What is the subscription?—The subscription of a Member is two guineas per annum with an entrance fee of three guineas, life composition, £21. The subscription of an Associate is two guineas, except in the case of certain agricultural Associates of small tenement valuations whose subscription is £1 1*s.*, and Associates pay no entrance fee. At an early date in its history the Royal Dublin Society endeavoured to improve the breed of horses in Ireland by offering premiums for the importation both of stallions and mares.

7257. When was that?—I am uncertain when this practice began. The following extract from the minutes show that the practice was in operation 128 years ago.

EXTRACT from the MINUTES of a MEETING of the DUBLIN SOCIETY, February 11, 1768.

"Ordered:—

"That a premium of £30 be given to Mr. Thomas Johnson of Slevire in the County of Tipperary, being at the rate of £5 each for six strong able mares fit for the plough, and other country work, and from four to six years old, imported by him into this kingdom since June last."

"That a gold medal be presented to the Right Hon. the Earl of Shannon (a member of this Society) in lieu of a premium of £30—for having imported into this kingdom the beginning of last summer, six strong able mares fit for plough and other country work: and also that another gold medal be presented to his lordship in lieu of a premium of £10, for having imported at the same time a fine black draft stallion. The said medals being adjudged according to a By-law which excludes every member from receiving any pecuniary premium."

"That a premium of £10 be given to Robert French of Brienfield in the County of Roscommon, Esquire, for a fine black draft stallion imported by him in August last."

Then follows minutes to the effect that a claim for a premium lodged by Mr. Philip Hutchinson of Clonskeagh, county Dublin, for importing ten mares and a stallion, should lie on the table; and postponing the consideration of another claim for a premium for importing a stallion. I find these claims were subsequently disallowed on the grounds that the importations had taken place before the period prescribed in the announcement of the premiums. In the year 1800 a Farming Society was started under the patronage of the Dublin Society, and it was granted a subsidy of £200 per annum by the Dublin Society. The Farming Society held two shows annually at Smithfield, Dublin, and one at Ballinasloe. In the latter show a premium of £10 was offered for the best draft stallion of any kind; and a premium of £50 "to any person who shall import the best lot of horses of the Suffolk Punch breed, to consist of one stallion and two mares." This encouragement led to the importation of a number of horses. The Farming Society was not self-supporting, and soon came to an end. In 1831 the Royal Dublin Society commenced a series of Agricultural Shows which have been maintained in Dublin without intermission to the present day. At first the Shows were very small. In 1831 there were only 52 head of cattle, six sheep, three swine, two Spanish asses, and six horses. The horses were agricultural draught stallions of various breeds. These Shows have been continued to the present time, but horses were struck out of the prize list in 1865. Agricultural horses were again introduced at the Spring Shows in recent years. It was not until 1868 that the Society held a Show for horses exclusively. At this Show the entries numbered 366. At the 24th Annual Horse Show, which was held last August, the entries numbered 1,363. The Dublin Horse Show is now the argest show of hunters in the world. The prizes awarded at the last Show amounted to £1,953; the Show was visited by 58,728 persons, including purchasers from the United States, France, Belgium, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and other countries. I have reviewed in the brightest manner the work of the Royal Dublin Society in improving the breed of horses in Ireland, apart from the administration of the fund paid to the Society annually under the Probate Duties Act. Before the Act of Union the Society was the medium through which the Irish Parliament administered grants for agricultural purposes, including horse-breeding. But from the time the Society started agricultural shows in 1831 to the present day, the shows have been supported out of the private funds of the Society exclusively. I wish to point out specially that not one penny of Government money has ever been spent upon the Horse Show. On the contrary, the Society offers out of its private funds at the Horse Show, valuable prizes which are intended to supplement the efforts of the Committee entrusted with the administration of the public fund to which I shall refer presently. It is difficult to say what has been the effect of the Horse Show upon horse breeding in Ireland. Concurrent with the development of the show there has been a marked development in the horse trade. There are no statistics of this trade available before 1878, in which year the Irish Veterinary Department commenced the publication of statistics of the export of horses from Ireland to Great Britain. The last published return shows that the average annual export of horses from this country to Great Britain has been as follows:—

Period.	Annual average.
1878–80,	24,723
1881–85,	28,453
1886–90,	30,444
1891–95,	32,464

These figures show an increase in the horse trade of the period ending 1895, when compared with the period ending 1880, amounting to 33 per cent. On investigating the increase in its relation to sexes, I find that the export of geldings has increased 25 per cent. in the period referred to, the export of mares has increased 44½ per cent., and the export of stallions has increased no less than 134 per cent. These figures are significant. It is important to note that the number of horses imported by Great Britain from Ireland exceeds the number of horses imported into the United Kingdom from all the countries of the world. For example, in the year 1894, Great Britain imported from Ireland 63,589 horses, while in the same year the total import of horses from all countries into Great Britain and Ireland was 22,866. About one quarter of these horses came from Canada, about one-fifth from the United States, Germany supplies another fifth, while Russia, Denmark, and Holland are the next in order. I am not aware of any means of ascertaining the number of horses exported from Ireland to foreign countries and British possessions. In 1894 the United Kingdom exported 259 stallions, 2,891 mares, and 13,307 geldings, making a total of 16,457 horses. Nearly half these horses went to Belgium, about quarter to Holland, while France took the greater part of the remainder. It will be seen from the figures I have given that Ireland has about twice as great an export trade in horses with Great Britain as the United Kingdom has with all parts of the world. Or, to put it another way, Ireland is far ahead of the rest of the world in the horse trade with Great Britain. This development has taken place concurrently with the development of the Horse Show, and must, I think, be largely attributed to the Horse Show.

7258. Before you leave the figures I should like to ask you one or two questions about them. Have you got any returns of the imports into Ireland?—From Great Britain, yes; I can quote figures from the British Board of Agriculture returns.

7259. Because some of the exports ought to be

balanced by the imports, ought they not?—Yes; the number is small.

7260. There must be a certain number of horses that go backwards and forwards?—The horses exported from Great Britain to Ireland in the year 1895 were 4,547—very small.

7261. Mr. La Touche.—Does it distinguish the mares and stallions?—Yes; 82 stallions and 1,775 mares, 2,690 geldings.

7262. Chairman.—You gave us just now the increased percentage of the export of geldings, mares, and stallions, and you said the figures were significant; what do you deduce from the figures?—The relative increase of the different sexes; observe that the geldings are 25 per cent., whereas in the case of mares it is 44½ per cent., and in the case of stallions as much as 134. It is not in geldings that the main increase has taken place.

7263. Well, the main increase according to that is in stallions, what do you deduce from that?—That it is the breeding stock that is leaving the country—mares and stallions.

7264. The stallions would probably include all the young thoroughbred horses?—Yes.

7265. Can you give us the actual number of stallions?—I can.

7266. In judging by percentages, it is necessary to know the basis you start from?—The number of stallions, of course, is relatively small; I have collected five-year periods—they give averages of five years which are, perhaps, the most trustworthy.

7267. You said the amount of stallions had increased 134 per cent. in a certain period, can you tell us how many were exported at the beginning of that period?—Yes; 63 in the first five-year period, 56 the second, 72 the third, and 138 in the last.

7268. Do you think that would be accounted for by increased exportation of young thoroughbred stock?—My own opinion about it is, that it shows that the foreigners have been coming here in increasing numbers to get our breeding stock.

7269. You think that the stallions serving in the country were sold out of it?—Well, yes; but it is impossible to say how many of these are yearlings or young horses before they are put to the stud; it is impossible to say what the number is.

7270. And can you give us the figures in the case of the mares?—In the case of mares the periods are, ending 1880, 9,901. I should say that that particular period is calculated upon three years figures, because the statistics only begin in 1878, but it is the yearly average for that three years; then the period ending 1885, 11,617; the period ending 1890, 12,992; and the period ending 1894, 14,042. It has gone up from 9,900 to 14,042.

7271. That appears to me more significant than the case of the stallions?—The number of mares is very much larger.

7272. How are these statistics collected; by whom?—The statistics I quote are published by the British Board of Agriculture; they get them, I believe, from returns prepared by the Irish Veterinary Department.

7273. Do they publish the returns of exports and imports?—They do, from Ireland to Great Britain.

7274. Do you know how they are collected?—I have no direct knowledge of it.

7275. Do you think that they are sufficiently reliable?—I cannot say that at all; I quote them as the only official figures available.

7276. But such as they are, the only official figures, do you think they are sufficient to enable you to form a correct opinion?—I should suppose them to be trustworthy.

7277. Can you suggest any improvement in the statistical information?—Without knowing exactly the method of collecting the figures, I should scarcely venture to pronounce any opinion on the subject, but I have no doubt the department do their best to get the actual result.

7278. You give us at any rate the numbers, whether they are mares, geldings, or stallions?—That is all in the public reports.

7279. No particulars as to age or breed?—No; I don't know whether such particulars can be obtained in a trustworty manner.

7280. Have you got any figures as to the number of horses in the country during those same periods?—Yes.

7281. Would you give them to the Commission?—I refer to those later on.

7282. Quite so. You were saying that this great development of the export went on at the same time as the development of the Horse Show?—Which is the effect is a matter of opinion.

7283. Mr. La Touche.—Are not the statistics of exports prepared weekly; don't the Board of Trade publish a weekly return of exports and imports?—Well, I am not sure what is the shortest period that they are available for; I don't know about that.

7284. There are no figures in the report, at any rate, that show?—There are no figures to indicate.

7285. You cannot show the exports of horses for the week of the Horse Show?—No; I have no doubt that the officers who make the returns have their statistics of the daily shipments leaving the North Wall.

7286. Chairman.—Will you go on with your statement?—I wish to refer to Lord Calthorpe's proposal some years ago.

7287. When was that?—In a letter to the *Times* of May 4th, 1875, Lord Calthorpe expressed the belief that no Government would interfere to check the exportation of mares (which, at that time seems to have attracted attention), and that all that was required could be effected by private enterprise. He offered to subscribe £100 per annum if 100 other gentlemen would follow his example.

7288. What year was that?—1875. He proposed that the fund should be devoted to the purchase of sound stallions to be located in various parts of the United Kingdom, and rendered available for farmers at low rates. Referring to horse-breeding in Ireland, he stated:—"The climate and soil are most favourable, the holdings are so small that most men have ample time to look after and educate their colts, and there is an innate love of horses in Irishmen unequalled even in Yorkshiremen." In the *Times* of May 5th, 1875, Lord Lucan published a letter strongly supporting Lord Calthorpe's proposal, and offering to subscribe £100 per annum. A committee was appointed by the Royal Dublin Society to advise as to how Lord Calthorpe's scheme could best be carried out, and the sum of £100 was placed at the disposal of the committee. Prizes were offered by the Society for essays on the best method of carrying out the details of Lord Calthorpe's proposal. The first prize was subsequently awarded to Mr. R. A. Smythe, of Lauragh, Portarlington, and the second prize was awarded to Mr. Dawson A. Milward, of Tullagher, New Ross. These essays were printed; I hand in copies. The financial support necessary for carrying out Lord Calthorpe's suggestion was not, however, forthcoming, and the idea was abandoned for the time being.

7289. Are these essays long?—They are perhaps too long to read.

7290. Suggesting how the scheme might be carried out?—They are interesting now from the historical point of view.

7291. Can you tell us shortly the general effect of them?—It would be very difficult to summarise either of the schemes. The financial support necessary was not forthcoming and the idea was abandoned.

7292. You mean throughout the United Kingdom?—Throughout the United Kingdom.

7293. Did the Royal Dublin Society take any action in the matter?—No further action than that; funds not being forthcoming, the scheme fell to the ground. Acting on the recommendation of the Horse Show Committee, the Society, in 1887, approached Lord Londonderry, who was then the Lord Lieutenant, and after some negotiations the Government promised a

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vote of £5,000 to encourage improvement in the breed of horses and cattle in Ireland. This sum subsequently became payable annually to the Society under the Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888. I shall here deal only with the administration of that portion of the fund appropriated by the Society to horse-breeding, viz.—£3,550 per annum. It is desirable at the outset to point out that this sum of £3,550 devoted to the improvement of the breed of horses in Ireland amounts to 1·35 penny for each of the 630,000 horses in the country, a little over 1¼*d.* each. Or, regarding the matter in another way, it amounts to just 1*s.* 5*d.* on every £100 of horse flesh in the country, taking the official estimate of £8 per head as the value of the horses. That is to say, the amount devoted to improving the article is about one-fourteenth per cent. of its value.

7294. What do you want us to deduce from that?—That the result to be obtained from such an expenditure no doubt would be proportionate to the expenditure.

7295. But, of course, the more successful you were, and the greater number of horses in the country, the less per head there would be to devote to them?—Quite so; but the fact stands that that is the actual amount per head.

7296. That would be reduced in proportion as you were successful in one point of view?—In the first year, the season 1888, 16 premiums of £200 each were offered for thoroughbred stallions to serve not less than 50 half-bred mares, the property of farmers whose tenement valuation did not exceed £200, at a fee of £1 for each mare. Sixty stallions competed for the premiums at the Horse Show in August, 1887. Sixteen were selected as sound, and suited for the purposes of the scheme. Each stallion owner received, immediately after the Show, £20 on account of the premium. Local committees were appointed to carry out the scheme in their several districts in the ensuing season. After careful inquiry the Horse-breeding Committee of the Royal Dublin Society selected competent persons to act as Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer in each district. These offices were sometimes combined. The Chairman submitted the names of the persons he proposed to constitute the committee. The actual appointment of the committee rested with the Society. Each local committee consisted of not less than 5 or more than 7 members, of whom at least 3 were farmers. The local committees held inspections in their districts, and examined 1,743 mares; 790 mares were passed as suitable, and 764 were served. The head-quarters of the service districts were—(1) Strabane, (2) Antrim, (3) Portadown, (4) Lisnaskea, (5) Ballymote, (6) Ballinrobe, (7) Longford, (8) Kells, (9) Edenderry, (10) Banagher, (11) Loughrea, (12) Templemore, (13) Tullow, (14) Rathkeale, (15) Cappoquin, (16) Dunmanway. In the second year, 1889, a similar scheme was carried out; but in the case of stallions serving in districts in which the owner resided, the service and grooms' fees were paid over to the Society. This change enabled the Committee to increase the number of districts from 16 to 18. The districts were re-arranged, and the head-quarters changed in several cases. They were—(1) Strabane, (2) Ballymena, (3) Lisburn, (4) Dungannon, (5) Enniskillen, (6) Ballymote, (7) Kingscourt, (8) Mullingar, (9) Roscommon, (10) Ballinrobe, (11) Athenry, (12) Parsonstown, (13) Baltinglass, (14) Kilkenny, (15) Thurles, (16) Rathkeale, (17) Fermoy, (18) Bandon. The selection of stallions for these districts took place at a Show held at Ball's Bridge, February 13th and 14th, 1889. Forty stallions competed for the 18 premiums.

7297. Why do you make these changes in the head-quarters?—It would be difficult to give the reasons in each individual instance; the committees had reports before them and, in some cases, direct information conveyed to the committee by members of the committee, which induced them to select other towns more suitable than those they had previously selected. At the shows of mares held by the district committees there were 1,745 mares submitted at fifteen districts; the numbers were not ascertained in three of the districts. Assuming that the numbers in these districts corresponded with the average in the other districts, the total for the eighteen districts would be 2,094. The number of mares actually served was 833. The following year the Society sent a circular to the owners of 690 mares in fourteen of these districts, 577, being 88 per cent. of the farmers, replied to the circular; and from these replies it was ascertained that 401 foals had been produced, 203 colts, and 198 fillies. 69½ per cent. of the mares served produced foals. In the third year, 1890, several changes were made. Shows were held in the Autumn of 1889 for the selection of stallions, not only in Dublin, but in Belfast, Sligo, Ballinasloe and Cork. At these shows sixty-one stallions competed for eighteen prizes of £20 each, on the condition that the selected stallions should each serve not more than fifty mares, the property of farmers of not more than £200 tenement valuation, at a fee of £3 2*s.* 6*d.*, of which sum the farmer was to pay £1 2*s.* 6*d.* The stallions were assigned to the following districts:—Belfast Centre—(1) Londonderry, (2) Ballymena, (3) Armagh, (4) Belfast, Sligo Centre—(5) Sligo, (6) Castlerea, (7) Clones, Ballinasloe Centre—(8) Ballinasloe, (9) Athenry, (10) Parsonstown; Dublin Centre—(11) Navan, (12) Mullingar, (13) Kilcullen, (14) Carlow, (15) Wexford; Cork Centre, (16) Dungannon, (17) Rathkeale, (18) Mallow. In each of these eighteen districts shows of mares were held. Excluding Ballymena, where the number of mares was not ascertained, there were 1,748 mares inspected. Prizes were awarded to the owners of the best mares, divided into two classes—those over five years old and those under five years old. The prizes in each class were £8, £6, £4, and £2, with a free nomination in each case; there was also a fifth prize in each class, consisting of a free nomination, as well as a champion prize of £10 for the best mare in each class. The number of mares served under this scheme was 841. A return, sent in subsequently by 648 owners of mares, showed that 465 foals were produced, 218 colts and 247 fillies. Seventy-two per cent. of the mares served produced foals. In the year 1891 the Society reverted to the selection of stallions in Dublin, and a Show was held at Ball's Bridge on February 7th. Forty-nine stallions competed for sixteen £200 premiums, the selected stallions being required to serve fifty mares, the property of farmers of not more than £100 tenement valuation. The judges of the stallions on this occasion reported as follows:—

"In compliance with the instructions that we should write a report upon the stallions which have been under our adjudication, we have the pleasure to state that in our opinion, they compare favourably with any show for the Queen's Premiums held previously in Dublin or in England, several of the horses representing a high class, and being thoroughly well adapted for getting hunters and half-bred stock. We had little difficulty in coming to a conclusion that the sixteen selected were qualified to receive the Queen's Premiums. While it is to be regretted that two or three of the horses provisionally selected could not receive premiums, still at the same time exhibitors may be congratulated on the very small percentage out of the entire number which failed to pass the Veterinary Surgeon's Examination.

"(Signed), CECIL LYARD.
RICHARD BELL.
C. J. BLAKE."

7298. Why did they give up the system of having shows elsewhere than in Dublin?—I should find it very difficult to give any reason; on the occasion of any change being made the matter is dealt with by a Committee; the individual members of the Committee have their own opinions, and would no doubt themselves differ in assigning a reason for the change.

7299. All you know is the change was made?—All I know is the change was made. The selected stal-

lions were assigned to districts of which the headquarters were—(1) Strabane; (2) Magherafelt; (3) Portadown; (4) Enniskillen; (5) Boyle; (6) Hollymount: (7) Roscommon: (8) Portumna; (9) Mullingar; (10) Ardee; (11) Enniscorthy; (12) Maryborough; (13) Macroom; (14) Listowel; (15) Carrick-on-Suir; (16) Thurles. The local committees in these districts held shows at which 1,520 mares were submitted for inspection. Five prizes of £5 each were awarded at these shows for mares under 5 years old, and five prizes of £5 each for mares 5 years old or upwards. There were also champion prizes of £10 for the best mare in each class. At the close of the season the number of mares served was 772. The owners of these mares were subsequently asked to send in a produce return; 560 replies were received, showing that 419 foals had been produced—207 colts and 212 fillies, seventy-five per cent. of the mares produced foals. In 1892 a new system was introduced. The owners of thoroughbred stallions were invited to register them. This was done by advertisements in all the Irish newspapers of any importance. A fee of £1 was charged for registration. The animals were examined as to soundness by Veterinary Surgeons appointed by the Society, and, each stallion was required to be in other respects suitable for the objects of the scheme; no charge was made for examination. Applications were received for the registration of 147 stallions. Twenty-nine of these failed to pass the Veterinary inspection, seventeen could not register for other reasons, 101 were registered. The Veterinary Surgeons reported that roaring, whistling, and cataract were the disorders most prevalent amongst the rejected animals. The utmost care was taken to ensure that no unsound animal should be registered, as it was considered that registration would be regarded by breeders generally, and not merely the farmers who received nominations, as a guarantee of soundness. In the register, a copy of which I hand in, the stallions are classified under counties taken alphabetically. Particulars are given of age, colour, height, pedigree, stud-book reference, owner, breeder, stations, and fee, and the number of services offered. There is an index to the stallions and to the owners. County committees even appointed, and in the months of March and April 101 shows of farmers' mares were held, and at these shows 2,473 mares were inspected. In most of the counties the collections of mares were large, and the animals were of a satisfactory character. In a few counties, notably in Ulster, difficulty was experienced in obtaining a sufficient number of suitable mares for the available nominations. This was attributed chiefly to the lack of first class stallions at convenient centres in these counties. The fees to be paid by the farmers who received nominations varied according to the fees charged by the stallion owners; when the stallion fee did not exceed £3, the farmer paid £1 and the Society paid the balance. When the stallion fee exceeded £3, the Society paid £1 and the farmer paid the balance. The farmer paid also in each case a groom's fee of two shillings and sixpence. The fees were collected by the County Committees. At the close of the season, the returns showed that 1,449 mares had been served, and that the owners had paid £2,089 18s. in fees. The owners of stallions were paid the sum of £4,794 18s. It was found that ninety-two stallions had participated in the scheme. Returns subsequently sent in by the owners of 1,056 mares, showed that 752 foals had been produced—385 colts and 367 fillies. Seventy-one per cent. of the mares had produced foals. The arrangements for the season 1893 differed but slightly from those of the preceding season. Applications were received for the registration of 137 stallions; eleven failed to pass the veterinary examination, eight could not be registered for other reasons; the remaining 118 were accepted. The Veterinary Surgeons reported that roaring, whistling, ringbone, and cataract were the prevailing ailments in the rejected stallions. They drew attention to the fact that fewer unsound stallions were submitted for registration, and that several horses rejected in the preceding season had disappeared from the country. As regards the mares, they were required this season to pass a veterinary examination; the number of nominations in each county was restricted to one for every £2 allotted to the county, and the farmer's share of the service fee was payable direct to the stallion owner instead of to the County Committee. At the close of the season 1,499 nominations had been issued, 1,294 mares served, and £2,556 14s. 0d. was paid by the Society to the stallion owners in addition to the payments they had received from the owners of mares. Returns were received from the owners of 873 mares, showing that 628 foals had been produced—334 colts and 294 fillies; seventy-two per cent. of the mares produced foals. It will be observed that a comparatively small number of farmers sent in returns this season. This is perhaps due to the fact that they were sent stamped post cards to be filled in and returned, whereas in former years they had been sent envelopes bearing a 1d. stamp which enabled them to return the forms under cover. In the season 1894 the proportion of the service fee payable by the Royal Dublin Society was made a fixed sum of £2—the balance was payable by the farmer. The scheme was in other respects almost identical with that of 1893. Applications were received for the registration of 141 stallions, three failed to pass the verterinary inspection, and thirty-three could not be registered for other reasons; 105 were accepted. At the shows of mares held by the County Committees, 1,448 nominations were issued. At the close of the season 1,284 mares had been served, and £2,568 was paid by the Society to the owners of stallions in addition to the fees they had received from the farmers. For the season 1895 a number of changes were made. The sums allotted to the several counties were re-arranged, the allotments of some counties being increased, while those of other counties were diminished. To each county a sum not exceeding £10 was allowed for expenses. The maximum tenement valuation of the farmers participating in the scheme was increased in the counties Clare, East Cork, Dublin, Kildare, Limerick, Louth, Meath, Roscommon, Tipperary, Westmeath, from £150 to £200.

7300. What do you mean by £10 for expenses?—Veterinary surgeon's fee and small office expenses allowed to the local committee, a sum not exceeding £10. The system of nominations to registered stallions was abolished, and premiums not exceeding £5 each were substituted. These premiums were offered to the owners of mares selected at shows held in the autumn, as follows:—(*a*) Two or three year old mares stinted to a stallion on the Society's Register for 1895; (*b*) Mares with foal at foot, stinted to a stallion on the Society's Register for 1895; (*c*) Foal at foot by a stallion on the Society's Register for 1894 or 1895. The exhibitors of mares were required to produce certificates of service from stallion owners, and to show that the animals had been their property for at least three months prior to the date of the award. The owners of thoroughbred stallions were invited to register them free of charge, the fee of £1 being abolished. Instead of requiring that each stallion should undergo examination by a veterinary surgeon appointed by the Society, a certificate of any member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons dated not later than February, 1894, was accepted, the Society reserving the right of further veterinary examination, or examination as to suitability if they thought fit. Applications were received from the owners of 308 stallions; 219 were accepted. The County Committees held in the autumn 68 shows of mares and foals, an average of rather more than two shows in each county. At these shows 1,106 mares and 706 foals were exhibited, and premiums amounting to £2,541 11s. 8d. were awarded. The arrangements for the current year are substantially the same as

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those for 1895. The limit of age for mares in class (*a*) was extended to four years, and the limit of £5 to the mare premiums was withdrawn. The number of stallions presented for registration was 264; 230 were accepted. The returns of the local committees have not yet been completed. So far they show a slight increase in the number of mares and foals competing for the premiums.

7301. If you have done with that part of the subject, there is, perhaps, a question or two I might ask you?—Yes; the next is statistical.

7302. Prior to 1895 stallions were inspected by veterinary surgeons appointed by the Society I understand?—Yes; prior to 1895 by veterinary surgeons appointed by the Society.

7303. And since then you take the certificate of any member of the College of Veterinary Surgeons?—Yes; but the Committee reserve at the same time the right, when they think fit, of having their own veterinary surgeon, or a veterinary surgeon appointed by themselves, to examine both as to soundness and fitness.

7304. Did they usually employ a local veterinary surgeon, or a veterinary surgeon from a distance, when they did the work themselves?—When they did the work themselves they went to some trouble to get the veterinary surgeons to inspect stallions in the districts in which they did not practice extensively.

7305. Do you know how it is now when you take a certificate; is the certificate generally derived from a veterinary surgeon in the locality?—Frequently it is.

7306. Besides unsoundness you would not register horses that are unsuitable in some other way; what are we to understand by that?—Unsuitable to get half-bred horses such as the Committee think it desirable to produce.

7307. You mean when the Society is sending down a veterinary surgeon to examine stallions you must give him some sort of direction as to what is meant by suitability?—Oh, yes; it would be very difficult to say what the directions are; the directions are not in print; a great deal is left to the discretion of the inspector or veterinary surgeon.

7308. Lord Ashtown.—They are good judges of a horse generally?—Of course they are selected as being suitable men to judge, from the Committee's point of view, what the stallions ought to be.

7309. Mr. Wrench.—Is not the inspector asked to furnish particulars of size and measurement and substance of the horse to the Committee?—That is so; he gives a return in detail.

7310. So that they actually have all the particulars of the horse that can be given before them?—Yes.

7311. Chairman.—Who decides as to the horse being suitable or not?—The Horse Breeding Committee.

7312. That is not a question for the veterinary surgeon?—No; he only reports as to soundness.

7313. Mr. Wrench.—Do you know that the Committee also ask for a description of the stock the horse has got?—Yes; that is an important element in deciding whether the horse is suitable or not.

7314. Chairman.—They are inspected also by an inspector?—Yes.

7315. Even now that the certificate of any member of the College of Veterinary Surgeons is accepted as to soundness?—Yes, as to soundness. As to suitability the Society send their own inspector to furnish them with a report, and to see the animal and to judge himself. He sends in all the particulars, and the Committee arrive at their decision.

7316. And those horses are examined for soundness every year?—Not since 1895, when the new system was introduced. A certificate dating back to the date which I mentioned is accepted.

7317. I don't quite understand that?—In the year 1895 we accepted the certificate of any member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, provided it was dated later than February of 1894, a short period before.

7318. Is that to hold good for all time?—This year it would be a year advanced; this year it would be February, 1895, for the year 1896.

7319. Then the horse would have to be examined for soundness every year?—Well, no; the Committee, if they think fit, forego the annual examination, if they have evidence before them satisfactory.

7320. Then a stallion need not necessarily be examined for soundness since 1894?—No; but the right to examine is always maintained.

7321. Lord Ashtown.—If a new stallion is wanted to be put upon the register he would have to be examined?—Oh, of course

7322. Mr. Wrench.—Is it only for strong reasons, such as in the case of a well-known horse like "Ascetic" or "Torpedo," that the Committee dispense with the examination?—That is so.

7323 Chairman.—They have very strong reasons when they dispense?—Of course; they don't dispense arbitrarily with the examination; it is on evidence before them that they dispense with it or not.

7324. You said just now that it was reported that one of the results of registration was that unsound horses were tending to disappear—horses that did not pass?—That is so; that was in the second year of the registration.

7325. Whose report was that?—The report came from more than one source.

7326. Can you tell us whether you have any further returns to the same effect?—I believe the Committee had information themselves independently that such a change had been effected by the system of registration; stallions were known to have disappeared which had previously been serving—unsound stallions.

7327. Do you think you could give us any figures?—It would be difficult; it might be possible to ascertain them, that is some years ago now.

7328. In the second year of the registration scheme?—That was in 1895.

7329. It would be very interesting if you could give us any figures on that?—I will look that point up and see if the actual figures are available.

7330. Then you said, I think, that in some parts of Ulster there was an excess of nominations?—In some parts of Ulster it was difficult to get a sufficient number of persons to apply for nominations.

7331. What did you do in those cases—were additional nominations given to other parts of the country?—The effect of a circumstance of that kind would be to leave a certain portion of the fund unexpended, and I deal with that afterwards in referring to the statistics—the financial results.

7332. Can you tell us at all why the somewhat sweeping change was made in 1895—was there any particular reason?—There, again, it is a matter of individual opinion of the Committee selected for the purpose of investigating the matter, and the reasons are not recorded upon their minutes.

7333. And as to the effect of those changes you have not yet had time to form an opinion, I suppose?—No.

7334. Mr. La Touche.—I would like to ask you one question—how do the Committee account for the fact that the moment they accept the certificate of any veterinary surgeon the number of stallions accepted and decided to be suitable increased something like 70 or 80 per cent.?—There were other changes made simultaneously; it would be unfair to assign that increase to the change in the veterinary examination alone.

7335. Chairman.—The fee was abolished?—Yes; the whole system was altered that year.

7336. Mr. La Touche.—How did that affect the stallion owner?—It is hard to say how the system of the alteration in the mode of paying the owners of the mares would affect the stallion owners, exceedingly difficult to follow it.

7337. Lord Ashtown.—In that year I think it was

a rule that although only mares received prizes they had to go to the registered sire?—Yes.

7338. Therefore if a horse was not registered it was a certain loss to the stallion owner—that was another inducement to them to register?—Precisely; there was an inducement for the registration of stallions which did not exist before, and no doubt that induced certain stallions which had not been registered before to come in.

7339. CHAIRMAN.—But that is not quite Mr. La Touche's question. He wants to know how you account for the fact that the number of horses passed sound and registered appears to have become greater since you accepted the certificate compared to what it was before?—That the proportion of horses passed sound increased from the beginning that has steadily developed, in fact it operates in this way—owners of stallions that are unsound find they have no chance of registering them, and I have no doubt that if the system of registration were continued sufficiently long it would be found that very few unsound stallions would be presented for registration.

7340. Give us, if you can, the percentage passed sound or rejected in the year 1895 as compared with 1894?—I have not calculated them out in percentages, but in 1895, 308 was the number presented and 219 was the number accepted.

7341. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—The number passed sound?—Apart from accepted, I could not give you the figures without examining the return for each individual stallion.

7342. You gave us the figures of the number passed sound and the number rejected for other causes?—I did; but I have not those figures for last year.

7343. CHAIRMAN.—Three hundred and eight presented themselves in 1895, and 89 were rejected for some cause or other?—Yes, for various causes.

7344. What was it in 1894?

7344A. Mr. WRENCH.—On a different system?—Yes, it is a different system; it is impossible to compare one year with another; there were 141 applications and 105 were accepted.

7345. 1895 and 1896 are really the only years that can be compared together?—They were the only two years that were worked on the same basis in the registration system, and there is a little difference even in these years.

7346. CHAIRMAN.—What was the difference made as regards the stallions?—As regards the stallions the system of registration is almost identical.

7347. The only practical difference that occurred between 1894 and 1895 was that in 1894 the Society inspected the horses themselves, and in 1895 they accepted the certificate of any member of the College of Veterinary Surgeons as to soundness?—As to soundness, that is the difference.

7348. Lord ASHTOWN.—They inspect the horse as to suitability themselves?—In all cases the question of inspection as to suitability has rested with the Society.

7349. CHAIRMAN.—Then there was an immense increase in the number of stallions seeking certificates?—Yes, a great increase.

7350. An enormous increase, an increase in the one year from 141 to 308?—That is so.

7351. How do you account for that?—How much of that fact is due to an alteration in the system of paying the mares, and how much is due to the alteration in the system of the veterinary surgeon's certificate, it would be impossible to say; there are two causes, and which of them is the main one I don't know.

7352. What puzzles me is that, according to that there must have been, prior to 1895 or prior to 1894, 167 stallions in the country, the owners of which thought they were sufficiently sound to obtain a certificate if they desired it, and yet they never came up to try to get one?—Yes.

7353. That is very odd?—It is.

7354. Can you account for it in any way?—Well, it is impossible to assign a cause; I don't know what the cause of it is.

Lord ASHTOWN.—There was not much inducement in those days, was there, for a stallion owner?

7355. Mr. WRENCH.—Was it not a fact that the Horse Breeding Committee at that time when this new registration was commenced, tried to ascertain the names of the owners of every thoroughbred horse in Ireland, and sent circulars from the Dublin Society to them and explained the scheme—was there not more trouble taken?—Yes; it was more extensively known and more extensively advertised, that is true; but how many of those persons were not previously aware of the scheme I don't know.

7356. But still great efforts were made to make it public?—Great efforts were made to make it public.

7357. Lord ASHTOWN.—And also, as I said before, that if the mares were not stinted to a registered sire their stock and themselves could not be exhibited at the Dublin Society's local mare shows?—That is so.

7358. And therefore it was an inducement to the farmer not to send his mare except to the registered sire?—And it was an inducement to the stallion owner to register. There are several causes, and what proportion of the increase is to be assigned to any particular cause it is very difficult to say.

7359. CHAIRMAN.—It is a remarkable fact that the number of stallions offering themselves for examination increased more than 100 per cent. in the one year, and it is a curious thing—at least I should think it would strike any person as a curious thing—that at the same time there was this change made in the system of examination for soundness—I only wanted to know if you could throw any light upon that?—Well, the fact is manifest that with the alteration in the system of veterinary examination came the great increase in the applications for registration, that fact stands; but as to how much of that increase is due to that alone, I see a great difficulty in arriving at any kind of opinion.

7360. Mr. WRENCH.—May not the owners look upon being registered in a register that they knew was going to be published in the Dublin Society's records—may they not look on that as an advertisement?—I think so.

7361. And a very valuable one?—I think so.

7362. And that was explained to them in a way it had never been explained before?—It was; it was brought under their notice in a way it had never been before; the inducement to register was greater in 1895 than in any previous year. A separate account has been kept since the year 1887 of the fund administered by the Society under the Probate Duties Act. From the beginning part of the fund, as required by the Act, has been devoted to improving the breed of cattle. The sum assigned to cattle was £1,450, but the sum spent upon cattle has never in any year equalled the sum assigned. I find the expenditure upon bull premiums in eight years has been £10,084, or an average of £1,260 per annum; to this should be added the proportion of the cost of printing arising out of bull premiums—say £60 per annum—making a total expenditure of £1,320 per annum on cattle. The remainder has been devoted to horse-breeding, viz. —£29,436 in eight years, say £3,680 per annum. In this calculation the receipts arising under the several schemes that have been in operation are omitted. These receipts amounted in eight years to £7,390, the greater part being fees received by the Society from farmers, amounting to £5,375. This sum was paid by the Society to the owners of stallions. During the past six years the Society has from time to time, as funds admitted, purchased ten stallions. These have all been resold except one, which was accidently killed in transit. The total sum paid for the stallions is £2,687, and the sum for which they were sold is £1,950 in cash, with conditions of service similar to those attaching to premium stallions. Part of the purchase money is still outstanding as it is payable by instalments. I hand in a general abstract of the accounts of the past eight years showing receipts,

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£47,390, and expenditure on horse breeding, £36,604, and on cattle breeding, £10,084; the balance on 31st December, 1895, was £702, which has since been expended in the current year's work. It will be observed that the cost of administration is not charged to the fund. It is easy to estimate what this charge would be, because in salaries and wages the administration of £23,312 costs the Royal Dublin Society £2,903, or 12·4 per cent. On this basis of calculation the administration of the Probate Duties Fund would cost the Society £734 per annum, but whatever the cost is it is paid out of the private funds of the Royal Dublin Society; it would be difficult for the State to ensure efficient administration on more favourable terms. I hand in also the annual abstract of the accounts which shows the financial results of the schemes which have been in operation each year.

7363. CHAIRMAN.—Is that all you wish to say on the administration of the grant?—That is all I have to say on that subject.

7364. Owing to the fact that it is administered out of the private funds of the Society, I understand that the whole of the grant is expended for the purpose of horse breeding?—The whole of it. The entire sum reaches the hands of those for whom it is intended. No expenses of administration are charged to the fund.

7365. Can you tell us where these stallions were bought—these ten stallions?—I have not the figures with me. I can get the figures. They have been bought in different places.

7366. At an average of £250?—An average of about £250 a piece.

7367. Perhaps you will let us know?—I will ascertain.

7368. And also to whom they were sold?—Yes, certainly.

7369. Can you tell us how it was managed, that they were sold for less than cost price?—It has varied with the different stallions.

7370. How did they select the persons to be allowed to buy them?—By inquiry as to the districts where they could be placed. Almost every year the Society has learned that in certain districts good stallions are not forthcoming, and they have inquired in these districts as to persons who would be inclined to take stallions on payment by instalments, with service conditions attached. From the beginning it has always been one of the regulations in the scheme that in the event of persons coming forward and expressing a desire to obtain stallions that the Society would aid them.

7371. They selected the man most suitable in a district?—That is the way it is really worked. A rule has been contained in the regulations almost from the beginning, that in the event of districts not being suitably supplied with stallions, the Society would consider in what way the deficiency could be remedied.

7372. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Have you any record in reference to these stallions purchased by the Committee, as regards the mares they have covered, their popularity with mare owners?—I have no doubt information could be obtained on some of those points.

7373. The CHAIRMAN.—When were they sold?—I have not those figures with me. They have been sold within the past ten years—from the very beginning. The total number purchased is small. I have given the results in ten years. I can hand in the name of each stallion and the amount paid.

7374. Mr. WRENCH.—I think they are all in the register?—Yes.

7375. So that the Commission can turn to them at once?—Yes; there is a return showing the names of the stallions, when purchased, the amount paid, the amount for which sold, the instalments paid, and the name of the person by whom the stallion was purchased.

7376. The CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything further you wish to state to the Commission?—I have no more statistics; if desirable I can supply further facts.

7377. You said, I think, that prior to the Act of Union this Society administered whatever grants were made by Parliament?—Yes; sometimes large sums.

7378. Can you give them to us?—It extends over a long period. One of the last Acts of the Irish Parliament was to vote £15,000 to be administered by the Dublin Society for the encouragement of agricultural industries.

7379. Can you get this information for us?—It would involve a good deal of research, because it extends over a long period; but I have no doubt it can be obtained.

7380. I noticed from some of the minutes you read out to us of the early days of the Society, that grants appear to have been given for the importation of mares, and occasionally for stallions?—That is so.

7381. Did that continue long?—I have endeavoured to get the information, but have not been successful, and cannot state precisely how long it continued.

7382. You don't know when it was discontinued?—That is the difficulty; the minutes are often very brief, and it is not easy to get information on a point of that kind.

7383. It would rather look as if there was a lack of good mares in this country at that time?—That is distinctly the inference to be drawn from the early work; persons were encouraged to import not only stallions but mares.

7384. As far as stallions are concerned that continues?—Yes; premiums were given in the latter part of the 18th century for the importation of mares.

7385. Would the records of your Society be able to give any fuller information on that point?—I doubt that it is possible to give any fuller information.

7386. You could not for instance tell us what kind the mares were?—It would seem that the desire was to get large animals "fit for the plough" as the term was—strong large animals. At the beginning of this century, immediately after the Union, the Society surveyed Ireland—made statistical surveys of 24 out of the 32 counties, and published these in some 25 volumes. I have noticed that in these there are repeated references to the horses of the county. In some of the surveys the class of horse in certain parts of the country is spoken of very highly indeed, and in other cases the horses are described as being miserable, and in two or three reports they are referred to as being barbarously treated by the people—badly fed and cruelly treated.

7387. From your statistical knowledge can you say at all if the race of horse has been improving in the country of late years?—Well, almost the only data upon which I could personally form an opinion would be from the Horse Show, and most unquestionably there has been an extraordinary development in the horses that come to the Horse Show; the figures show that most distinctly, and then there is the development which I have pointed out as taking place in the horse trade—the exportation of horses from Ireland is increasing, and I think if the breed of horses were deteriorating it is scarcely likely the trade would be increasing. I would draw the opposite inference, that because the trade is increasing the breed must be improving; it must be worth the while of Englishmen and foreigners to come to this country to buy horses or they would not come.

7388. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—How do you arrive at the value of a horse as £8?—I take the official figures; I would not venture to value them.

7389. Dr. Grimshaw's?—Yes.

7390. Are you quite sure you have got that correctly; in his statistics he value horses of different ages at different prices and different valuations?—I have taken round numbers, five millions for the 630,000 horses; it would not make much difference if you altered the valuation a little one way or the other.

7391. In 1888 or 1887 I collected some statistics,

and, adopting Dr. Grimshaw's figures then, I arrived at £15 per horse, yearlings, two-year-olds, and three-year-olds, and the numbers of the respective ages?—If that is the value the expenditure upon the article becomes ridiculously small. It would become about one-twenty-sixth per cent.

7392. I should like to ask you if the Committee or Council have any information showing which of the many schemes adopted by the Society was most popular with the horse breeders?—The Society is at present collecting information on that point, but the returns are not complete. So far as they go, it is pretty much of an equality as to the scheme considered most popular. Some counties prefer one scheme and some another. When I speak of one scheme and another, I mean the system of subsidising stallions is preferred in some counties, and the system of prizes for mares is preferred in other counties, and at the present moment the Society has in draft a scheme which would afford different counties opportunities for carrying out whichever scheme they preferred.

7393. And you propose for 1897 a new scheme?—It would be practically a choice of either of the schemes formerly in operation.

7394. Are the owners of stallions consulted as regards the popularity of the various schemes as well as the owners of mares?—I cannot say that they have been. I don't know to what extent we have obtained opinions from them.

7395. You are endeavouring to obtain the opinions of the owners of mares?—Well, they are the people for whose benefit the fund is destined.

7396. Mr. WRENCH.—With the exception of these copies of the Surveys, are there any books belonging to the Society that would be likely to throw any light on the subject of the ancient Irish horses?—I have consulted other works, but I find they are for the most part prepared from the Royal Dublin Society's returns.

7397. So that the County Surveys are the only books available?—That is so. I might say that I noticed in one of these Surveys that in the year 1807 there was a scheme for the registration of stallions, and T. J. Rawson, who surveyed that county, recommended getting rid of what he describes as the "barrel of oats stallion"—that is the horse that gave a service for a barrel of oats—and he proposed a system of registration, and that suitable stallions should be charged a fee, except in the case of those recommended by the local Farming Society, in which case the fee should be remitted. That was nearly a century ago.

7398. The CHAIRMAN.—I suppose nothing came of that at the time?—Nothing.

7399. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you any more information of that kind or anything of interest you have come across?—It is scattered through a great number of volumes, and I have not read them all through. I have read a large number, but not the whole lot.

7400. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—It was not before 1868 that the Royal Dublin Society gave any prizes to thoroughbred stallions, the first subsidising of stallions occurred in 1868?—The scheme commenced in 1887 and 1888.

7401. But were there not prizes in 1868 at the Horse Shows?—The Horse Shows commenced in 1868, and that was the first year the Royal Dublin Society offered prizes for thoroughbred stallions. They gave Lord Shannon and others gold medals in the last century for draft stallions. Immediately on the Farming Society discontinuing operations in 1831, the Society commenced shows, and horses were included in them up to the year 1865. The horses were for the most part agricultural horses; but I observe, in looking over the catalogues, there were occasionally thoroughbreds.

7402. These were occasionally?—Yes; and apparently hunters on some occasions. That system of giving prizes to horses at the spring shows was discontinued for a couple of shows, and immediately afterwards the system of holding a show exclusively for horses commenced.

7403. In the scientific department of the Royal Dublin Society is there any information regarding the ancient Irish horse?—There is not; the best record is in the statistical Surveys.

7404. That was in the middle of the last century?—That was in the beginning of this century; most of the Surveys were published in the first five years of the century.

7405. Is there any information concerning the horse of the 16th century?—No, there is not; these Surveys in some cases refer to what is called the old Irish horse, described as a "garron"—a horse of the native breed is frequently spoken of as a "garron."

7406. The CHAIRMAN.—Amongst all these different changes I think the limit of valuation has remained the same?—In certain counties it has been extended from £150 to £200, it being believed that the best class of mares would be found in those counties in the hands of persons of the higher valuation—a more suitable class of mares.

7407. About these local committees—they were entirely appointed?—Yes, entirely appointed.

7408. Has the Society ever considered whether it would be advisable to have any elected element in them?—You see the sum the Society has been dealing with—£100 per county is exceedingly small—and any system of election would be a costly system. I think the cost of election would exceed the £100.

7409. And for the future I understand you to say that the Society propose to give to these local committees the option of adopting which of the two schemes they like best?—That is the proposal they have at present in draft; it is practically accepted for the coming season, but not quite definitely arranged.

7410. Supposing there was a larger Government grant, have you considered what would be the best way to administer it?—The Society has only dealt with the administration of this fund; what they would do as regards the administration of a larger fund is a contingency that has not arisen, and I could not offer any opinion.

7411. The Society, I suppose, would think itself capable of administering a larger fund?—That is rather a delicate question to answer.

7412. It has been suggested by a good many witnesses that mares in foal should be registered—a large system of registration—can you give us any idea as to how that could be done if considered desirable—whether it should be undertaken by the police or what?—Such a thing could not be carried out without very considerable expenditure.

7413. Probably you have not considered that?—No; the position of the Society has been that we get £3,550 for the thirty-two counties of Ireland.

7414. I am not asking you the question as representing the Society, merely as your own opinion?—Individually I have no opinion.

7415. Is there any other information you can give us, Mr. Moss?—I am not aware that there is; if any should occur to the Commission as desirable I shall be happy to furnish it.

Mr. DAWSON A. MILWARD, Lavistown, Kilkenny, examined.

Mr. Dawson A. Milward.

7416. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County of Kilkenny?—Yes.

7417. You are engaged in farming?—I have been since 1849.

7418. And engaged as a land agent?—Engaged as a land agent and very largely engaged in farming, and have been breeding horses.

7419. You breed yourself?—Yes; I have always

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been breeding half-bred horses from my farm mares, and mostly with thoroughbred horses, some of them in some instances with the half-bred.

7420. What do you sell them as?—For hunters, and some first-class carriage horses. A large number have turned into rather good hunters; they are large horses.

7421. Is your part of the country suitable for horse breeding?—It has always had rather a good name. The south part of the county, which is called the Welsh mountains, has always been noted for a good class of useful horse. The north side is not quite so good, but at the same time produces a good class of horse.

7422. Is it limestone soil?—The north end is all limestone, the south end is not.

7423. And you think the southern end is better than the northern end?—Just as good every bit in my opinion.

7424. You think the limestone soil is not necessary?—It has not been my experience that it is necessary. I may say I was the person who wrote that essay that was mentioned by Mr. Moss just now in 1875, and I had my attention pretty well called to public horse breeding ever since, and I have been a member of the Horse Show Committee for many years.

7425. It is rather generally expressed that lime is necessary—do you know if the water contains lime?—It is almost entirely granite and clay slate soil in the south of the County of Kilkenny; the limestone does not come below Thomastown, two-thirds of the way down.

7426. Does the river come from the same place?—Yes; but it is a tidal river in a low part of the county, and it is a hilly district, so it could not derive anything from drainage.

7427. Does the river rise in a limestone country?—Yes.

7428. And it is possible there is lime in the water?—The water in the district I live in is absolutely derived from the watershed of the hills, and these hills are very high and pass their water into the main river, which is a tidal river for many miles up, so it could not possibly derive any lime from that.

7429. What is the general class of horse bred in your part of the country?—Very poor; worth from £15 to £20. They have degenerated very much indeed. There is a large fair in Kilkenny and you would not, perhaps, get three or four £30 horses amongst them.

7430. To what do you attribute this?—To the sale of mares to go abroad very much. I find if I have a goodish mare the foreigners will buy her. I sell a great many horses in Clonmel fair, which is the best fair in the country, and the foreigners almost always take the best of them.

7431. You think the farmers have been tempted by the higher prices they get for the mares?—Absolutely; I don't think that the proportion of hunters bred by the small farmers is worth talking of. You sometimes may get a nice light weight, but the average horses in those fairs are altogether below troopers—mere cabbers and delivery cart-horses.

7432. For that class has the price gone down much?—Very much.

7433. Do you think it can pay any small farmer to breed?—It cannot possibly; to sell a four-year old at £15 cannot pay them.

7434. Then what do they do it for?—They have the mares and send them to the horse without knowing what they are doing it for, not as a money-making transaction certainly.

7435. Are there as many horses bred now as formerly?—I think so.

7436. What kind of mares do you breed from yourself?—The Irish half-bred mare—clean-legged, big, heavy, lumping mare, such as if a little better class would go into a brougham—they have been suitable for my work.

7437. Do you always put them to a thoroughbred?—Generally. Some of the best steppers I have bred were by half-bred horses.

7438. What do you mean by half-breds?—Anything that cannot go into the Stud Book, because our Irish half-bred horse is almost a thoroughbred. He has a great many dashes of thoroughbred.

7439. Do you keep stallions yourself?—No, never.

7440. How is your county off for stallions?—I think we have quite enough. I think the system of registration has effected it a good deal, but I think it fairly well off.

7441. How has the registration effected it?—I was put on the Horse Breeding Committee in 1889, and I was partly the origin of these changes spoken about, so it might be well to give my opinion on that. In 1889 I started the proposal that it would be better to give the money to mares, because we thought that there were plenty of stallions in the country, and that the stallion owners were able to take care of themselves. I was very much out-voted at the time; but subsequently, in 1894, that same proposition was adopted, and that is the meaning of the great change your lordship has mentioned in the system or working of the Government grant. Since that I think that system has been handicapped by the fact that the horses to be used are obliged to be registered. In the registration of these horses—

7442. Stallions?—Yes, I call them horses; in the registration they are liable to be selected and also to be inspected for soundness; I think that the soundness question is a question beyond all doubt—that they should be inspected for soundness; but I am not prepared to say that the inspection for quality is fairly carried out or worth doing. I find here in the statistics of the thoroughbred class in Dublin, which are supposed to be the better class horses—very much better than the horses adopted for Queen's premiums—horses that would scorn the idea of Queen's premiums—that the judgments there are so various and so up and down, that to my mind they have destroyed all confidence. I find the horse that wins first prize this year, leaving another horse unnoticed, next year he comes out unnoticed, and the unnoticed one of the previous year comes to the front, and so on. That has had a great deal to do with injuring the idea of registering, and prevented many from registering in the first place; the fee for registering was an item, but that has been done away with. The idea that men should not be allowed to exhibit their mares unless in foal to registered stallions also works badly. In Kildare there are 16 horses registered, and out of these 13 are serving at fees over £4, leaving only three horses in the county of Kildare—which in horse-breeding is the leading county in Ireland—to be used by the farmers under £150 valuation, because they charge only £3. In other counties I have the statistics showing very much the same sort of thing.

7443. What are you quoting from?—From the Register of Thoroughbred Stallions of the Royal Dublin Society for 1896. I have taken all the horses with their fees: the horses are given in each county, and the fee they charge is also given. In the county of Londonderry—take that as an example—no horse is registered, and the result is that no farmer in that county can exhibit a mare of any sort or kind. The farmer might go outside the county if he got the chance, but in his own county he has not the chance. Therefore I say the registering system has rather broken down. The total number of horses that was put on the register was 234; out of this there were 69 charging over £3, leaving only 165 horses in all Ireland from which these men could select. That, in my opinion, has tended to reduce the number of mares exhibited to an enormous extent. My experience of breeding horses has been that it is exceedingly difficult to judge from the looks of a stallion what he is going to do at stud, and my opinion is that the farmers judge by produce more than by appearance. A farmer would therefore be much better pleased to judge by produce than to be bound to go to any particular horse, and if he had his choice I think

we should have a very much larger number of mares exhibited. It has been said by dealers, by masters of hounds, and by every person, that we want mares; we have plenty of stallions, and it is with that idea I started this system of trying to get money given in prizes to mares; but, as I said just now, it is handicapped by this regulation pressed on me at the meeting. I have here the original resolution proposed, and that was amended and altered, introducing this system of registration which I think has done the mischief.

7444. You think the system as applied to mares has not been as successful as it ought to be, from the fact that these mares cannot be sent to a registered stallion inasmuch as there is not one near enough?—There is not one near enough.

7445. You object to the system of registration as applied to stallions, not on account of the examinations for soundness, but on account of the suitability?—A good deal; I don't think the stallion owner likes to submit his horse to be crabbed, in other words——

7446. You would not do away with the examination for soundness?—No; I think that is absolutely necessary, and for the mare too.

7447. And the horse being passed sound you would leave it to the farmer to go to the horse he liked best?—Yes. In my opinion the farmers of Ireland have produced this wonderful breed of horses without any assistance from any society or association, and I don't see why they want it now, if we could put a stop to these unsound horses. I have a map showing, in Kilkenny and Wexford, the location of these horses.

7448. What map is this?—A map of Ireland on which I have pencilled down the location of these horses—in Kilkenny the horses are nearly all at the south; the larger part is the northern part, so that the northern people have no opportunity of using the registered stallions. No farmer who works his mare can afford to send more than ten miles—it is the utmost limit; it is a day's work for a mare to travel ten miles out and back; any person who has to go beyond that he is barred; it is all very fine for idle mares that can be sent away and left there. My mares work up to the day they foal; then, if the times are not pressing, they are turned out altogether; if the times are pressing they are brought to do a half day at the end of a fortnight. The registration, I think, has been the great cause of the scarcity of the mares exhibited.

7449. Provided the horses were passed sound, you would leave it to supply and demand?—I should; I think any farmer who has brains enough to keep a good mare has brains enough to go to a good stallion. I don't know whether you would like to take down the way these thoroughbred prizes were awarded.

7450. I don't think so—you mean prizes for thoroughbreds?—Prizes for the horses at the Horse Show; it is one horse one time, and another another time.

7451. Is that the same in every class?—The other classes you cannot judge in that way, because they seldom turn up again.

7452. What classes were you speaking of?—The thoroughbred stallions; there is a class at the show for thoroughbred stallions. I happen to have one catalogue here; there were two prizes given—one for service premiums under this scheme, section 1A—thoroughbred sires to get weight-carrying hunters—that's a different class altogether I am speaking of, that throw evidence before us of the ups and downs of stallions.

7453. I think that would be useful?—Well, in 1887 in the thoroughbred stallions exhibited for the £50—£30 2nd, and £20 3rd prizes—there was £100 given in this class in prizes—Clanronald got first, and Pride of Prussia second.

7454. Mr. CAREW.—What year was this?—1887, and Heart of Oak was also shown. In 1888 Heart of Oak was first, Adriatic second, and Brankholme third; and amongst the others, Mont Cenis was also shown, but not mentioned. Next year Heart of Oak was first; King of Trumps second, and the Marshall third; the Marshall was a horse that had been rejected the year before for a Queen's Prize; Mont Cenis was also shown. In 1890 Ascetic got first, Mont Cenis second, Heart of Oak third, thus reversing the judgment of previous year. In 1891 Ascetic was again first; Studley, a horse also rejected for a Queen's Prize, was second, Heart of Oak was third, and Mont Cenis, highly commended and reserved. In 1892 Ascetic was first, Mont Cenis second, and Royal Meath was third; Marchaway was highly commended, and Heart of Oak got nothing at all. In 1893 Marchaway gets second place, Telephone first, Royal Meath third, and Studley, M.P., and Victoricus not mentioned; M.P. and Victoricus were bought at large prices by the Dublin Society, to be sent out in the country as specimen horses, Victoricus having cost £500. In 1894 Marchaway was put first, beating Royal Meath second. In 1895 Royal Meath was first, Duke of Portland second, Swift third; Marchaway being highly commended, and M.P. not mentioned at all. In 1896 Royal Meath was first, Red Prince second, Duke of Portland third, and Marchaway simply commended. That, I think, shows the ups and downs of stallion judging, and that, in my opinion, has tended very much to bar a stallion owner from showing at local shows for these Queen's prizes.

7455. What do you suggest should be done?—I have suggested there should be no judging of stallions, letting the farmer to judge for himself.

7456. Then you object to prizes being given for stallions?—Let the prizes be given as before, those are the Dublin Society prizes; these are the Queen's premiums of £200.

7457. You object to them?—Yes; if a horse is really proved sound, let the farmer judge for himself.

7458. I don't understand exactly what it is you mean?—I want all the money to be distributed amongst the mares, and let the man coming there with a mare to the local show, let him produce the certificate that that mare in foal, or foal at foot, has been got by a horse proved sound; let him judge for himself if he likes the thoroughbred or half-bred. I have bred as beautiful horses with the half-bred as I ever did with the thoroughbred. I had Shiels, the great colt buyer in my yard one day, and he said, "I think those are the four finest steppers I ever saw in my life in one yard." They were got by a horse I had given £25 for.

7459. What prevents the man now choosing for himself?—He must go to a registered horse.

7460. What has registration got to do with the fact that apparently there are great discrepancies in judging at the Horse Show?—It would tend to show that registration has broken down.

7461. Lord ASHTOWN.—I think you mean that the inspection of horses for fitness has broken down on that evidence?—Yes, that is what I wish to convey. In 1890 we had shows held in Dublin, Sligo, Cork, Ballinasloe, and Belfast. I find some horses went all the way from Dublin to Cork, and from that to Belfast, and when they got to Belfast they were found to be good enough, while in Dublin and Cork they were rejected.

7462. CHAIRMAN.—What is good enough for Belfast is not half good enough for Cork?—That is it. I found many instances where horses rejected in one instance afterwards got prizes. I have always said all along that this system of inspection of stallions has been a mistake.

7463. Have you any other suggestions to make as regards the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme?—I think that is a very important part of it. There is one thing here I think it right to mention. Mr. Moss seemed not to understand why it was that in 1894 the number of registered horses had increased so much, and I tried to call his attention to the fact that in 1894 it became a condition in competing for

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all prizes that all stallions must be registered; that is the reason of the great increase of these stallions that competed for the £50 prize were obliged to be registered; they never were registered before.

7464. Mr. WRENCH.—And all their stock?—Yes; the result was that brought them in; it runs up the number of registered stallions, but does not help us a bit in the way of breeding horses. A great deal has been said about Hackneys. I am not an advocate of the Hackney in any shape or form. I don't know anything about the Hackney, but I think it should be understood that no one has yet, as far as I am aware, and I have attended a good many meetings of the Royal Dublin Society. I don't think it has been suggested that any part of this £5,000 should be devoted to Hackneys.

7465. CHAIRMAN.—Have you ever bred from anything but a thoroughbred?—The Irish half-bred. I never bred from a Hackney. We have no Hackney that I am aware of in our county. Major Connellan said there was one, but I don't know where he is.

7466. In your district is there a Clydesdale or cart horse?—There are one or two, and they are rather popular, but I don't think they are doing very much.

7467. You have never used them yourself?—No. I don't think the Royal Dublin Society ever intended to introduce the Hackney; in 1891 and 1894 they did give prizes for Hackneys, and it was understood if any person chose to bring a Hackney they should be allowed to come there and show them and allow the public to judge for themselves; there was such a cry got up that that was put a stop to, and now they repudiate them: if I wish to breed from a Hackney I don't see why I should be prevented.

7468. Do you wish to breed from a Hackney?—I think from the class of mares I see going to the fairs—strong thick little mares that would kick sixpence for a mile along a road—that a cross with the Hackney would do good: I don't think a cross with a Hackney would ever produce a hunter, and as to their being inferior animals I cannot understand it. From what I have seen I think they could not be so bad as they are made out.

7469. From what you know of the Hackney you don't think it would cause any deterioration?—My nephew has brought a Hackney from England, and he is as useful a cob as I have ever seen.

7470. Do you think from what you know that the Hackney blood would be likely to improve the breed of high-class harness and carriage horses?—I don't think it would; but those horses are a small item in proportion to all the horses—one per cent.

7471. What do you look on in your county as the most profitable class of horse to breed?—The good class is of course the most profitable, but very few can breed it. For one £30 or £40 horse I saw in the fair at Kilkenny, there were a couple of hundred from £20 to £25.

7472. If you can produce the hunter it would be the most profitable?—Undoubtedly.

7473. You think the introduction of two or three Hackneys would produce a better class hunter?—No, but it would produce a more saleable horse. What the farmer wants is a horse that will go to the dealer and get his money—a horse that there will be a good sale for; to suggest that every horse to be bred by every common farmer is to be a hunter, I cannot see it.

7474. Do you think the Hackney could be kept from contaminating other breeds?—We have admitted Clydesdales and I don't see they interfered. There was a gentleman said he had bred from a Clydesdale and sold it for a very large sum.

7475. I was not talking of Clydesdales—all I want is your opinion. You said you think it would be a good thing if there was a Hackney sire or two in every county; you think at the same time that the Hackney blood would be detrimental to the blood of hunters?—I don't think it would be actually detrimental; I don't think it is going to help the hunter, but I don't think the crossing in 100 years would be appreciable.

7476. Would not the blood be likely to spread largely?—There are 600,000 horses in Ireland: it would take a long time to permeate them.

7477. Are the sires in your part of the country sound in your opinion?—I think so.

7478. Are they good enough?—Quite good enough—I don't know though that £3,200 is going to make any great improvement, and unless we get more money it is very hard to do much with that.

7479. Do you think the system of registration has conduced to the disappearance of any unsound stallions?—I have not heard of the disappearance of one.

7480. Lord ASHTOWN.—Speaking of the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme, I gather you want to give the money to the mares?—Yes.

7481. How would you manage about settling whether a stallion was sound or unsound—some authority I suppose?—I should say it would be quite sufficient for the owner of the mare to be bound before he could exhibit his mare to procure from the stallion owner a certificate, and be in a position to say that the stallion had been proved for soundness.

7482. Most stallion owners have the certificate, I fancy?—They have; because I should say the Royal Dublin Society would have the right to slip in and have the horse examined.

7483. Would you publish a list of sound stallions?—I would not exactly publish them.

7484. You would have to have some list for the farmer?—I think the local Committee would be competent, and if they had any doubt to call on the Committee of the Royal Dublin Society and certify its examination by a Dublin veterinary surgeon.

7485. You don't approve of inspection on the principle that these sires had been put up and down in the Dublin Show?—Certainly. I don't think the inspection goes further than to say these sires are fit to get horses. It sometimes has been said a sire is not suitable and when the sire has been shown to others they said he was quite suitable. I have in my mind a sire rejected by the Inspector of the Royal Dublin Society; to my mind he was suitable, and some of the members of the Committee said he was; but he was rejected on the ground of suitability—he was perfectly sound.

7486. You would allow a farmer to send his mare to a half-bred or thoroughbred, whichever he thought most suitable?—I would allow the farmer to be the judge, and in my opinion he is as good a judge as we shall ever get; he judges by produce.

7487. You would not bind him down to go to a thoroughbred?—No; I would not bind him to any particular sire.

7488. Mr. CAREW.—You spoke of breeding very good stock by a half-bred sire that you bought for £25. Can you tell us his breeding?—By a thoroughbred out of a Clydesdale mare. I bought him for the use of the tenants; I was at that time agent on a very large property, but I used him myself for three or four mares.

7489. He is what you call a draft horse?—Better than that—a clean-legged horse, a good stepper.

7490. You would approve of that crossing?—If I could get another horse like him, I would never breed from anything else.

7491. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you ever bred from the produce of a thoroughbred horse, the second cross?—Yes; these very often run light. I think that when a light horse runs anyway contrary with you he is literally worth nothing; if he is a perfect beauty of a thoroughbred horse he is worth a good deal, but he must be a very good one.

7492. Do you think the heavy class of horse like the Clydesdale or Shire is required on Irish farms?—No, I don't think so; I have compared notes with Scotch farmers, I have had as many as fourteen pairs of horses working, and my opinion is that on the light land I had I was able to plough quite as deeply as they were.

7493. Which do you think it pays a small farmer to breed, a hunter or harness horse?—It is very seldom you get a hunter—the harness horse, I think.

7494. You think action is desirable in the harness horse?—Rather; it is most important.

7495. I think you said Ireland had succeeded in breeding better horses than any other country—you did not say to what cause you attributed that?—The Irish farmer has always had a dash of sport in him; he is fond of a good horse, and for that reason they have kept up this class of horse all through.

7496. Do you attribute it also to the soil and climate?—I don't think it has much to do with it—feeding is much more important.

7497. You know a great many parts of Ireland—in the country generally what class of farmers do you think breed the best horses?—Men from £300 to £400 valuation—big men beyond all question; I know a great deal of Cork and Limerick, and there the horses are much in the hands of big men.

7498. They are a small proportion as compared with the entire?—They are; the multitude of horses are in the hands of small men, and that is what I want to improve; if I could do that I would be satisfied to allow the few to go on as they are.

7499. You think the few are able to study their own interests?—I think so.

7500. The CHAIRMAN.—The smaller farmer in your locality cannot breed at a profit?—I don't think they can pay for the service of a mare—rear the colt to four years old and sell it for £15 or £20. I would try and give them a horse that will get the £20 to £40—give them more action.

7501. They cannot breed at a profit now; you don't see any reason why they should not with a suitable sire?—Certainly; I think this buying of stallions by the Dublin Society has been rather a mistake. It has been suggested that we should go to England and buy mares. I don't see how that could be done, our experience of bringing over these stallions is not satisfactory. One was killed on the road, and another, bought for £350, was sold for £50, and so on; that sort of thing rather frightens me—I don't like it.

7502. Have you considered the question of Government Stud farms?—I have considered it; I don't know it would be a great advantage; I think it would be a good thing, but at the same time it is doubtful how it can be carried out. If they had not a demand for the refuse horses I don't know what they could do with them. Everybody must have refuse; I don't think any man can breed more than one good horse out of every ten; if he does that he is very lucky. The refuse would hardly be good enough for troopers, and what they would do with them I could not tell.

7503. Assuming there was any grant of money, in what way do you think it could be best expended?—I think put in the hands of local committees to hold shows and encourage the farmers with lumping prizes. It is nonsense giving £5 prizes; it doesn't induce any man to keep a mare. If they gave £40 or £30 in two or three districts it would be such an inducement as to induce a lot of farmers to compete for them. In that way we could get the mares kept, if we could run the chance of getting £20 or £30.

7504. You think this money should be expended in prizes for mares?—Yes; I have thought so for a great many years, and at the time I wrote that pamphlet I thought that was the great thing. I only got second prize because I gave my opinion very strongly. Poor Mr. Morrogh told me that was the reason.

7505. You have nothing else to say?—Thank you. I think I must have exhausted you.—I know I nearly have myself.

Mr. P. SHELLY, Ballywalters, Callan, examined.

7506. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Kilkenny?—Yes, sir, South Kilkenny, very near the borders of Tipperary.

7507. And are you engaged in farming?—Yes, sir.

7508. Do you breed horses yourself?—I do, three or four foals every year.

7509. And do you buy also?—I do, from twenty to thirty horses every year.

7510. Do you buy all over the country?—Generally in the district I spoke of, South Kilkenny and East Tipperary.

7511. What kind of horses do you breed yourself?—Well, I aim at producing hunters, and I was fairly successful.

7512. What do you consider the most profitable kind of horse to breed?—The thoroughbred horse. Sometimes I have bred from horses that are not in the stud book, but practically thoroughbred horses. There are two or three in the locality I speak of that I consider as good as any thoroughbred horse to breed from.

7513. What kind of mares do you use?—Well-bred mares with size and substance about them.

7514. And you aim at producing hunters?—Yes.

7515. And if they are not good enough for hunters they sell as harness horses?—If not good enough for hunters I sell them as carriage horses, and if not I sell them for troopers.

7516. Do the farmers about you aim at producing hunters?—Yes, the farmers of South Kilkenny and East Tipperary. They are principally sold at the fair of Clonmel. Mr. Milward made an observation about Kilkenny; but in the fair of Kilkenny they only get the refuse, because the best of the colts in South Kilkenny go to Clonmel, and the dealers scour the county, so it is only the refuse of the county that goes to Kilkenny.

7517. The animals in the fair at Kilkenny you would not consider a fair sample of the produce of the county?—No.

7518. Do you buy generally in the fairs, or how do you buy?—Sometimes in the fairs and sometimes at the houses.

7519. To whom do you sell?—I make a hunter, and sometimes I sell to gentlemen who make hunters of them and sometimes to dealers.

7520. Do you sell generally to the locality or to dealers?—Both.

7521. How is your part of the country off for stallions?—Well, fairly well off, but we might be better off.

7522. Are there any half-bred stallions?—There are a good number.

7523. Do you approve of them?—If you mean by a half-bred stallion a horse that is got between a thoroughbred horse and a Clydesdale, I certainly would not approve of him under any conditions; but there are a good many horses called half-bred horses that are really almost thoroughbred horses, and I would approve of those; I have used them successfully; there are two or three in the locality at present, very successful sires.

7524. Are there any Clydesdale stallions in your part of the country?—Yes; but they are not used in the south of Kilkenny or east of Tipperary; in north Kilkenny there are some Clydesdale stallions.

7525. Do you think the farmers generally about you take sufficient care to mate their mares to suitable stallions?—Generally speaking I think they do, in south Kilkenny they take an interest in horse-breeding and have bred a good class of horse there for a number of years.

7526. Is the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in operation?—Yes; I am a member of the committee myself.

7527. Do you think it has done good?—Well, I think so.

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Mr. P. Shelly.

7528. Have you any improvements to suggest with respect to the scheme?—I think all stallions ought to be subject to some system of registration and examination.

7529. But they are now, are they not?—Not altogether, I think. Every stallion no matter what class he is, whether he is a thoroughbred horse or a half-bred or a draft horse or anything else, should be examined particularly as to soundness, and I would suggest that there ought to be some system of prizes to encourage farmers to keep the young brood mares of size and substance—give them good prizes to keep them.

7530. Are they inclined to sell their best mares?—They are unfortunately.

7531. More than they used to be?—Yes, I think so.

7532. You think something ought to be done, if possible, to counteract that?—To keep the good mares in the country.

7533. You have been accustomed to frequent fairs; do you think the quality of the animals at the fairs is as good as it used to be?—I think so.

7534. I suppose a good many horses are sold direct to the dealers without going to the fairs at all?—Yes; as I said before, the dealers scour the end of the county and in Tipperary also; they buy the four-year-olds from the farmers, the farmers don't make hunters out of them, and they go around, a good many what you would call gentlemen dealers, and they buy a colt to make a hunter of him.

7535. There are no Clydesdale sires in your part of the country?—Not in the south of Kilkenny; but just on the borders near my district there are two or three Clydesdale sires, but they are not much used by the farmers of south Kilkenny—very little used.

7536. Are there any stallions except thoroughbreds or half-breds—any Hackneys or anything of that kind?—There are one or two Hackneys not in the county, but they come into the very extreme southern end of it for the last year or two.

7537. Are they popular?—No, sir. I made inquiries since I got the notice from Mr. Neville, I have made inquiries from the farmers of the district, and I have found they are not popular—they don't like those horses.

7538. Have you had any experience in breeding yourself from a Hackney sire?—No, I never did.

7539. What sized holdings are there about you?—They are mixed, on an average 60 to 70 acres—of course there are some larger and a good many smaller—but that would be about the average of those who breed horses.

7540. Do the small occupiers breed at all?—Not so very much. Not so much as they used a few years ago when a two-year-old could be sold at £12 to £13, but latterly that trade has dropped.

7541. Is it, in your opinion, the case that the price for high class hunters and carriage horses has kept up, but the price for the inferior horse has gone down?—The price for good class horses I think is as good as ever it was if not better, but the price of the inferior horse has gone down 50 per cent. or more.

7542. How do you account for that?—Those dealers that used to export cheap horses tell me that the American horse has knocked out the trade, and I suppose motor cars may have had something to do with it, or bicycles; but the principal reason, the shipping dealers tell me in the fairs, is the cheap American horse.

7543. Lord Ashtown.—You say that the most profitable horse to breed from is the thoroughbred—do you mean the thoroughbred or a horse got by a thoroughbred?—Well, a horse that is a pure thoroughbred, that is of course the right sort.

7544. By thoroughbred I mean a horse that is in Weatherby's Stud Book?—Yes.

7545. Do you breed those yourself?—I do.

7546. Do the farmers round you?—No; I thought you said the most popular horse.

7547. No, the most profitable?—Oh, I would not say that an individual horse got by a thoroughbred sire must be most profitable.

7548. But do you think, taking all the mares in your district, the average of the horse got by a thoroughbred sire is the most profitable?—Most decidedly so.

7549. Do you think if a farmer bred from a thoroughbred or from a half-bred he would get a better price on an average for the horse got by the thoroughbred?—That depends on the mares he breeds from.

7550. Do you think the thoroughbred is the most suitable horse for all the mares on an average in your district?—I would say so.

7551. You would not be averse to a half-bred sire?—I would be averse to a half-bred sire; as I said before the sire got by a thoroughbred horse out of a common mare most decidedly I would object to.

7552. But a half-bred sire with three or four crosses of blood in him?—I have used such a horse as that with success myself.

7553. You think that is a sire that is useful at times?—Most decidedly; we have two or three horses of that kind in our county that are good sires.

7554. At present under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme only thoroughbred sires are registered?—I should not be averse to registering horses that are not in the Stud Book but whose pedigree can be proved satisfactorily, and in addition to good looks I should go in for performance of some kind or other, either in the hunting field or over country.

7555. There are very few half-bred sires that are hunted?—We have some horses in our locality that won point to point races.

7556. Stallions?—Yes, and have been used with success.

7557. Are there any half-bred sires in your district that are getting good stock that have not won races?—Yes, there is one horse.

7558. Could you tell us his name?—There are two; you mean to say a horse that has not won races; there is a horse called Reliable in the East of Tipperary—he is a son of Old Victor; to my knowledge he has never won races, but is a very successful country sire as a getter of hunters and market stock.

7559. Do you know how much blood he has?—He is at least three-quarter bred; his dam was a well-known good hunter.

7560. There are no Hackneys in your district; what are the Hackneys that stand near you?—I am not up in the pedigree of Hackney horses, but they are said to be pure-bred Hackneys.

7561. Can you tell the Commission their names?—I could not; I paid so little attention to them that I really don't know their names; but one of them, I am sure, is a pure-bred Hackney, for I would not doubt the gentleman who owns him; he would not tell an untruth about anything.

7562. Where does he stand?—He stands in the north end of Waterford, at the other side of the Suir from Kilkenny.

7563. Mr. Wrench.—You may tell us his name; we have a list of all these horses?—Mr. Malcolmson is the owner of one of the stallions; he lives at Portlaw.

7564. Lord Ashtown.—Have you seen stock by him?—Foals.

7565. Do you know how they sell?—There is no trade; they are only foals.

7566. Mr. La Touche.—You always breed from registered sires yourself?—No, sir; I have occasionally bred from a horse not in the stud book, but I would be very far from saying they were half-bred sires; they were considerably more than half-bred.

7567. When you breed from a thoroughbred sire would you put any value on the fact of its having been registered by the Dublin Society?—I should.

7568. And you think, apart from the Dublin Society, that no horse should be allowed to cover mares whatever his breed unless he had a certificate of soundness?—I would say that would be a very good thing.

7569. Have you found that the price of horses has much deteriorated in your district?—The price of a good well-bred horse has not deteriorated at all, but the price of the inferior horse, of the weed or screw, has deteriorated more than 50 per cent. in the last six or seven years.

7570. Has the price of the ordinary light-weight harness horse deteriorated?—No; if it is a really good harness horse it has not.

7571. Then what class of horse do you think has deteriorated, the horse that is a little worse than a trooper?—Yes.

7572. Mr. WRENCH.—You think the good harness horse has held his own in price?—I think so, sir.

7573. Do you think Kilkenny fair is improving?—In numbers it has, but in quality it has not.

7574. The other Hackney you mentioned, where did he stand?—Almost in the same district, three or four miles away from that.

7575. Also in Waterford or Kilkenny?—It is in Tipperary, in the town of Carrick-on-Suir.

7576. But you are not sure it is a Hackney?—I am not; I never saw its card of pedigree; it is only hearsay, but I saw Mr. Malcolmson's Hackney.

7577. And they have only been a short time in the country?—Only two years.

7578. You have had no opportunity of judging what their stock would turn out?—Except what I could judge from the foals.

7579. Would you be inclined to go further and examine the stallions; you have heard it suggested that all horses should be registered; do you think that a good thing?—I do.

7580. And do you think that could be carried out in the country without too much trouble?—I think so.

7581. Do you think that would put up the price of horses if you were always able to produce a certificate and if the breeding could be traced?—I think so with foreign buyers; it is always an object with them to know how colts are bred.

7582. CHAIRMAN.—How do you think such a universal system of registration could be carried out?—I think it could be carried out through the County Committees at present—the County Committees appointed under the Royal Dublin Society. Of course, it would cost a little more than at present, There would have to be some paid officials appointed, but I think it could be carried out through them.

7583. It would have to be compulsory—the universal registration of horses that Mr. Wrench was speaking about?

7584. Mr. WRENCH.—Mares and all?—That would involve a great lot of machinery.

7585. CHAIRMAN.—Your answer to Mr. Wrench was intended to apply to stallions only?—Stallions only.

7586. Anything else you would like to say to the Commission?—No; I don't think there is.

Mr. H. REYNOLDS, Ballinalee, Edgeworthstown, examined.

7587. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county Longford, I think?—Yes, sir.

7588. Have you personal experience of horse-breeding?—I have, for over 21 years.

7589. Do you keep stallions yourself?—Yes.

7590. Are they registered under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Three of them.

7591. How many do you keep?—Five.

7592. Three of the five are registered. Do you think the scheme of registration has done good?—I think it has done a lot of good, and it is absolutely necessary to continue it if you want to improve the breed of horses.

7593. Do you think it ought to be carried further—to all horses?—All sires, in my opinion, should be registered after passing a veterinary surgeon's examination.

7594. Do you mean that if they did not pass the veterinary surgeon's examination they should not be allowed to serve?—Should not be allowed to serve. It is the only possible way you can relieve the small farmers from these mongrels that attend markets and fairs for three months of the year. If you give the farmer any encouragement or assistance he won't pass £1 or 15*s*. Sometimes they make cheaper bargains, and some of these people are caught in the market through favouritism or other things, and they might bite their nose next day for going to an unsuitable sire. If these sires were not in the way you would have suitable horses, and would have soundness on the one side.

7595. Do you find registering your own horses has made them more popular with the farmers?—Not a bit more popular.

7596. How many mares do you keep yourself for breeding purposes?—From five to seven, and sometimes I have eight or nine, according as I breed a young mare.

7597. What kind of mares are they?—Four thoroughbreds.

7598. And you breed thoroughbred stock?—Yes, and have bred it.

7599. What are the others?—The others are half-bred mares, mares that I work on the farm, and if I get a good filly I take a foal off her, and let her stay until she comes of age.

7600. What do you expect to get out of them?—If I get a good one he will make a hunter, if not, he is bound to make a coaching horse to sell to the English dealers.

7601. Do you breed from two-year-olds yourself?—Occasionally, if I get a good strong one, that is, one well-grown, that develops early. I take a foal off her as two-year-old and I find it does her no harm. She has the next year's rest, and I have a foal for her grass, and a foal comes in next time again.

7602. Are there many horses in your district?—A great number.

7603. What are they mostly?—The majority are hunters. A great number are what you call medium or high class coaching horses. They are sold to the northern dealers who feed them for six or eight months and sell them to Wimbush or East and those. They are sold in Mullingar fairs and all around me, three-year-old colts. Sometimes a farmer keeps an odd one until four-year-old. If he has a son to ride him or is capable of doing it himself, he will keep him and train him, and sell him for a hunter at a fair price. If a horse can hunt the county Longford and has a fair turn of speed he will go with any hounds in the world.

7604. Do they sell them at home or in fairs?—They sell them in both; but nearly the principal men who breed anything worth while are so well known that they are attended by the principal dealers.

7605. How is your country supplied with stallions?—It is fairly well supplied.

7606. Are there any half-bred stallions?—Yes, a good many of them, but they are a mongrel sort, you cannot call them half-breds. I have a half-bred sire myself, and he is a very old horse now and very fresh, he has been as largely patronised as any horse in Ireland and has got a good class of hunter and harness horse, a good marketable horse.

7607. Are there any pure bred cart horse, or Hackney stallions?—No; there was one Hackney stallion came to it about two years ago, but he has gone away.

7608. Why did he go away?—Want of support; that is why many a man changes his residence, my county would not have a Hackney; they are very fond of a nice good horse, and can get as much for him as any county men in Ireland.

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Mr H. Reynolds.

7609. You never used the Hackney sire yourself?—No, nor would not.

7610. Or anything except a thoroughbred?—Or a half-bred. I went over two years ago to Yorkshire and bought a thoroughbred coaching horse; he was a prize taker in the Yorkshire Stud Book; he has taken very well in my locality and they are men of very shrewd good judgment there. I went to see a number of the foals—I have three myself—and as far as my judgment goes they are a fair good foal with good points and plenty of bone, and I consider these sires are just as suitable and as clean bred to bring in to put to our small fillies—to put strength into them—that even if they went back again to the thoroughbred horse it would not be a taint in them or softness.

7611. You think it would be an improvement?—I consider so. I have tried the experiment, and a great number of farmers about me have approved of him.

7612. When did you buy this horse?—Two years ago, and some of the six months old foals sold at £10 or £12 within the last mouth: those farmers who did not want to keep them, or could not afford to do so.

7613. And those foals you have by this horse?—I propose to keep them.

7614. Do you propose to put them to a thoroughbred horse?—I have only one filly, but I will try it.

7615. Your idea would be that the introducton of this strain of blood would improve the mares and render them more likely to produce good stock?—I would not go so far as to say improve them, but it would keep it and add a little more bone, so that you can go back again to the thoroughbred.

7616. Are the people in your district inclined to sell their mares and breed from inferior ones?—As a rule they will sell all their good young mares, three year old and four year old; the last few years I found more to try to breed from two year old fillies than all the time I had sires. I find them more inclined to take foals off their young mares this year and last year than they were for some time and then let them go idle and come to maturity, and if a mare produces a fairly good foal it will pay for her grass, and the better she is the more valuable she is when she comes of age.

7617. Do you think the young stock in your part of the country has improved or not?—I do. They have kept up very well, comparatively speaking. As a proof that they are fairly good they are patronised by northern dealers. They don't breed so much in the north, but they come to our locality and very frequently they would get a fair foundation of two-year olds or one and a half-year olds to bring back to the northern breeder.

7618. Are the prices kept up?—It is for a good horse or the making of a good one.

7619. For the inferior horse is the price as good as it used to be?—It is not.

7620. Do the small farmers breed much about you?—They do; they are very fond of breeding, and the very small farmer sells the foal at about six months old and it helps to pay his little demands, and his mare works all the same for him. These are the men that would require a little assistance, but I don't think that you could expect a first-class hunter or high-class harness horses from them, but you would get a useful horse. You might get some of these, three-quarter mares they call them; they will breed useful horses if they get a good sire.

7621. What kind of a sire do you think would be most useful?—I think a half-bred horse—say a horse with one stain or two from the thoroughbred horse, if his mother was of a good family—would be the best. They want to have them to work a little as a two-year old on the farm, and let them grow to five years before they sell them to English dealers, who wont buy them under four and a half years old, and very few farmers can afford to keep them. These farmers have not hands or don't understand the management of them. If they get a thoroughbred horse he is too hot and contrary. They have narrow passways on their farms, and crooked ways, and the thoroughbred is too quick; the only way they can do is to starve them, and then they are no use for anything afterwards.

7622. Lord Ashtown.—What are your sires?—Three registered thoroughbreds and the half-bred horse and the coaching horse.

7623. Which do you find most patronised?—The half-bred.

7624. You think the half-bred sire is the most useful in your district?—To a farmer he is; they can afford to keep their produce a little longer, and can work it and use it.

7625. You think it pays a farmer best in your district to breed from a half-bred sire?—It is better for a farmer who has good land to breed from a thoroughbred horse.

7626. You mean a farmer that has land that he can let a mare and foal run on?—Yes; but to the small farmer who must work the mare up to the time it foals, and after it foals, a thoroughbred is no use, or the produce of it, because it gets crabbed; he is no use afterwards.

7627. What made you get the Yorkshire coach horse?—I was recommended by some of the principal English dealers. I could not get a half-bred horse, and they said to give this a trial and get a pure-bred horse. I went and got a horse in the Yorkshire stud book. I spent a fortnight looking for him. I wanted to get a hunter-made horse, with clean legs, no hair, light action, and good shoulders. He was five year old when I bought him, and I gave a long price for him.

7628. You find the farmers patronise him?—They do; they admire him very much. Some of them are more than satisfied with the produce of the foal. They have great bone and nothing clumsy; shoulders good for one and a half-year old, and good back and loins.

7629. Mr. Carew.—How are the dams of your half-bred sires bred?—There is only one half-bred sire; his dam was by Freeny, by Lord Clarence's horse.

7630. What sort of draft blood is in the dam?—His dam was by Freeny, and grand-dam by Rough Robin, that is as far as I could trace him; he himself is by Lord Clarence, a horse that stood out at Swords, and Clarence was by Claret.

7631. You spoke of breeding from a two-year-old, what sort was the produce?—Very strong; and furthermore I found the fillies that had had foals; there were five fillies, and I found the three that had had foals just in as good condition and looking as well to-day as the idle ones.

7632. Mr. La Touche.—What do you do with the young stock yourself that you breed?—I keep them up to four and a half-year, or if I have a good colt I sell him in the cavason, or a good-looking horse I keep and train him as a hunter.

7633. Which do you find you get the best price for?—The produce of the thoroughbred horse.

7634. Do you think the average value of the produce of the thoroughbred horse is higher than the produce of anything else?—You get as much for one as might bear you over three or four years as for the other.

7635. Mr. Wrench.—You keep five stallions, three registered and two not?—Yes.

7636. Which do you charge most for?—The registered horses.

7637. And you think it is an advantage to have them registered?—I believe it is a very great advantage, and I believe it has caused a very great improvement since they began to register.

7638. Would you like to register your coach horse too?—If it was possible I would, but no horse would be registered up to this except it was a thoroughbred in Weatherby's Stud Book.

7639. Would you approve of registering other

horses?—I would, and I think it is the only way you can possibly protect the small farmer in getting rid of the mongrel.

7640. Which do you find pays best—breeding the thoroughbred or half-bred?—It depends on the class of man who breeds.

7641. I mean yourself?—Oh, thoroughbred.

7642. You alluded to a Hackney having been in your district; can you tell me his name?—I don't know his name; a gentleman from England brought him over, Mr. Graham; he was supposed to be a prize winner; he had a lot of medals round his neck.

7643. You are not sure he was a Hackney?—He was said to be.

7644. The small farmers breed a good deal about you?—They do.

7645. And you think they are the men who want most help?—That is if you want to get rid of bad horses out of the country.

7646. Would it be possible to stop them breeding horses?—I don't think it would; I think they would be quite satisfied to go on breeding, and if there was any assistance given in the way of giving them a free sire, some little assistance given to that registered sire I think it would help them.

7647. And you think it would be well spent money?—I do.

7648. I suppose you don't think it would be possible for them to breed high class hunters or harness horses?—You might get a few of them, but as an average you would not.

7649. What kind of horse would pay them best to breed?—Useful horses to go to harness or for tram purposes, or the like of that.

7650. Good action?—Good action—a light harness horse.

7651. They want a hardy class of horses to get ready soon?—They do want a hardy class of horse, and the mares are fairly lively; they are not coarse.

7652. Do they leave their foals out in the winter?—The general run of them let them run out, and if they get enough to eat, I would sooner have that than shut him up in a small house.

7653. They don't take them inside the dwelling-house in Longford?—No, but they would not begrudge taking in a good one.

7654. CHAIRMAN.—Anything you would like to say to the Commission?—I would register the half-bred horse that would be considered suitable, and would have undergone a veterinary surgeon's examination. Then if it is possible, or there is any means of doing it, the money given at present by the Royal Dublin Society should be increased, because only five or six men will get a portion of it. £90 is given to my county; that is divided among four or five classes for mares, and then something for foals—that is not worth any man's while to lose his day and go eight or nine miles for the chance of that; you would get a good jolly fellow that would spend it all before he got back; it is not worth it.

7655. They want more money?—I think if you gave money for the young mares and then I would give a free nomination to the selected sire; the money you are giving is only going to five or six men. Under my plan there would be forty or fifty free nominations and the men would take it in preference. I would let them go to any sire if he was registered, but sometimes you will get these farmers as cute and as good judges what to breed as any man in Ireland; the only thing that prevents them is want of money.

7656. And registration you think should be granted if the horse passes sound?—If the horse passes sound.

7657. The question of suitability ought not to come in?—Certainly, suitability. I would register him if he has all the natural and proper qualities about him to be a sire and had a sound veterinary surgeon's certificate.

7658. And also you would admit half-bred horses provided they passed sound and suitable?—If they passed sound and suitable, for at present you have a very fair foundation with a number of thoroughbred sires, and it is in order to keep that alive and keep it in working order.

7659. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Would you approve of any horse being allowed to cover who is not registered?—If he acquitted himself as a good sire and foal getter, and his produce was good, and his owner made a representation to the Royal Dublin Society and let that be inquired into, there is nothing in the world can be easier found out than the good or bad properties of a sire in a district; you cannot keep it quiet.

7660. I am not referring to the Royal Dublin Society; but would you make it compulsory that every entire horse should be inspected as regards soundness before he was allowed to cover a mare?—I would.

7661. Lord ASHTOWN—And to keep the registration alive you would want some other sire to cover the fillies?—Yes.

7662. Do you think the fillies are too light?—A good many of them are too light, and if you have not a filly fit to make a constabulary or army remount it is no use in the world; but at the same time a farmer might take a turn out of it for a couple of years and take a foal out of it, and that mare when four or five years old might be a useful mare in her class and no use when three year old.

7663. Mr. CAREW.—Have you seen any Hackney produce from the west in your district?—I saw some represented to be that. There are a number of foals come up, and hundreds of them are sold in the different fairs the last month or so. I asked some of the men why they had not better foals. I generally buy a couple myself and let them run round until they come of age. I said "Why have you not better foals?" "Oh, bad luck to the Hackneys," said he. That was the only answer.

7664. Mr. WRENCH.—You could not tell whether they were Hackney produce or not?—No; I only heard that.

Mr. THOMAS M'CUTCHEON, Street, examined.

7665. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Co. Longford?—I live quite close to it, just on the border, but I farm some land in the Co. Longford.

7666. Is your district a horse-breeding district?—Yes.

7667. Do the small farmers breed much?—They do, a good deal.

7668. What class of mares are generally bred from in your part of the country?—There are some very good mares in the hands of farmers who are pretty extensive, and the small farmers have a small weedy bad class of mare, but we have some very good mares in the hands of farmers that have a considerable portion of land.

7669. How is your country off for stallions?—It is fairly well off for thoroughbred stallions, but we have no good half-bred stallions, at least very few.

7670. Have you any pure-bred stallions of any other kind except the thoroughbred?—Not that I know of.

7671. What does your district produce mainly, hunters or carriage horses?—Both; that is with the good class of mares.

7672 What do these small farmers produce?—At present they have a wretched class of animals, the fairs are full of them, they cannot be sold, they are apparently useless for any purpose.

7673. Can they produce them at a profit?—Oh, no, they cannot get rid of them at present.

7674. And yet they go on breeding?—They have bred from these mongrel horses for some years past;

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Mr. Thomas M'Cutcheon.

now they have seen the folly of it, and I don't think they are breeding so much this last year or two.

7675. Are there any stallions in the country that would suit their mares at all?—No; they are badly off for a horse to put more size and bone and action into the produce.

7676. What kind of a stallion do you think would be most suitable?—I think a good half-bred stallion.

7677. Is the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme in operation about you?—Oh, yes.

7678. What has been the effect of it?—I think it has had a very good effect.

7679. You approve of it?—I do, decidedly.

7680. Do you think the farmers have a tendency to sell their best mares?—They have I think; the trooper trade has done a lot of harm buying good fillies for troopers; they go away, and we never see them again.

7681. Do you know are they kept at home or bought by foreign Governments?—The three-year-olds are bought by foreigners now, as I don't believe this Government will buy less than four-year-olds, and the best three-year-olds are taken away.

7682. Does that go on to a great extent?—Every good three-year-old filly if it is sound is sold; there is plenty of demand for them

7683. Do you think that the produce generally of your part of the country is worse than it used to be, or better?—I think it is holding its own with a good class of mare served by a thoroughbred horse, but I certainly think the half-bred animals bred from mongrel horses have deteriorated considerably.

7684. Mr. La Touche.—Have you any experience of Hackneys?—No, I have never seen a Hackney in my part of the country, either sire or produce.

7685. Do many droves of these Connemara ponies come up to the County Longford?—A great many.

7686. You have seen them?—Yes.

7687. Bought them?—I have.

7688. Noticed any marked improvement in them for the last two or three years?—I bought none for the last two or three years.

7689. Why?—I have bred a good many other horses myself.

7690. Have you observed any difference, improvement, or the reverse?—They always come up as foals, and I really have not seen what they have been like; they come up in droves of twenty or thirty, and the people about pick them up.

7691. Do you know if there is any difference in the price?—Well, I have not asked the price this year, I have not seen them sold even.

7692. Chairman.—What do they use these Connemara ponies for?—They make very nice cobs and good trappers, good hardy breed, some of them are sold for very good prices.

7693. What size are they?—They are up to 14 hands, 14.2 some of them.

7694. Do the small farmers breed from them at all?—No, not very much.

7695. Just use them for their own farm purposes?—Yes.

7696. Can you make any suggestion how these farmers could be induced to keep their best mares to breed from instead of selling them?—I would be greatly inclined to give the money that is distributed to the young mares to encourage people to keep their three or four-year-olds if possible, and I think if they were offered a good prize they would keep them, and then there would be a chance of their being bought as hunters when four or five-year-old by men who won't buy them as three-year-olds.

7697. Do you approve of breeding from two-year-olds?—I would on good land, but I would not allow them to be bred from if they are put to work. I think the small farmer that works the animal and breeds from her, produces an inferior animal, and destroys the mare itself.

7698. Anything else you would like to suggest to the Commission?—No, my lord, except I heard a good deal of the registration, and I think that is one of the principal points that should be adhered to. I don't think a horse should be absolutely in the power of the inspector so far as his appearance is concerned, but I certainly would have every horse that a man is getting a price for having a mare put to, I would have him registered as sound.

7699. You think a man ought not to be allowed to keep a stallion as a matter of profit without a certicate of soundness?—I do; and I think if these men were asked to produce their horses for registration they would do so if they believed him sound, and the unsound horse would soon go out.

7700. Mr. Wrench.—Do you think these small farmers who breed such bad animals now need assistance?—I do.

7701. And the class of animal that pays them best is something they can work on the farm with good action, and can sell afterwards?—Yes.

7702. I think you said action is essential?—Oh, certainly.

7703. Helps to sell them?—It does.

Mr. T. M. Carew.

Mr. T. M. Carew, Kildangan, Kinegad, examined.

704. Chairman.—You live at Kildangan, King's County?—It is just in the County Meath, bordering on the King's County.

7705. Are you pretty well acquainted with both counties?—The district about me I am pretty well acquainted with; I am acquainted with three or four counties, Kildare, Westmeath, Meath, and King's County.

7706. You breed horses yourself?—Yes, I do.

7707. Thoroughbred stock?—Yes, and half-bred.

7708. Have you a stallion of your own?—I have a half-bred stallion for my own use.

7709. And how many thoroughbred mares?—I have two thoroughbred mares.

7710. And how many others?—I have seven or eight or ten; I had ten foals this year.

7711. And putting aside the thoroughbred stock, what do you aim at producing?—I put the thoroughbred mares to the thoroughbred horse

7712. Mr. Carew.—What do you aim at producing outside a thorough bred?—I understood that I was asked had I thoroughbred mares, I said I had two breeding, and those mares I am breeding from by a thoroughbred horse.

7713. Chairman.—What do you put the other mares to?—The strong mares I put to the thoroughbred horse, and the light mares to my half-bred horse.

7714. And what is the produce generally sold as, or do you use them yourself?—I use them and sell them when they come to five years old mostly as hunters; I take a foal from them at two years old, and leave them idle until four-year-old, and then if they are stout and good and make a hunter I train them; but if I don't think they are suitable for that I try to sell them as a trapper or harness horse.

7715. Are there a great many horses bred in your part of the country?—Yes; nearly every farmer about me produces a foal every year.

7716. What class of mares have they got?—The small farmers have very coarse mares, about 14 hands or 14.3 high, rather stout, bad action; they breed from half-bred horses. I don't think we have a good half-bred horse in the district.

7717. Are you pretty well off for stallions in that part of the country?—Fairly well off for thoroughbred horses, but badly off for half-breds.

7718. Are there any carthorse stallions or Hackneys or anything of that kind in the country?—The

only horse I know there is a good Clydesdale horse belonging to Hannan, of Killucan, seven or eight miles from me, in the County Westmeath; his get are good marketable horses, and a great many of the farmers about me go down to him, and they sell very well at one and a half or two-year-old.

7719. What are they sold for?—Sold as clibs; the small farmers about me sell their colts at one and a half year old, and the northern dealers buy them at from £8 to £10 and some £6; there are some bad description of mares about me very weedy.

7720. Taking the generality of the farmers about you, what do you think is the most profitable animal for them to try to breed?—Hunters, if they can afford it and have a good mare to breed from a thoroughbred horse, but the half-bred horses I think are the most profitable; they are easily kept, and mature early, and can be turned into money.

7721. Do you think the quality of the mares has deteriorated?—I don't think they are as good as they were twenty or thirty years ago; in those olden times it was all a tillage country round me, and a farmer with 100 acres kept eight or ten horses, and then he had good strong stout mares, and bred from the same class horse as the mare, and I think we had a better stock at that time. Now there is little or no tillage except with the small farmers, men with ten or twenty acres, and they keep a couple of horses, and if they keep a mare they put the colt to plough at one and a half year old; a great many of them put their two-year-old fillies to the stud and let off the older ones.

7722. You approve of breeding from two-year-olds?—I do, greatly.

7723. You think it does no harm?—I am not quite sure it does not, if they are well fed; but you must leave them idle, though the farmers about me all work their two-year-olds when carrying a foal or suckling, drawing turf.

7724. Have you any knowledge of the Hackney stallion at all?—No, none; except that I have seen them out at Mr. Wrench's.

7725. Have you seen any of their produce?—No, except at Mr. Wrench's. I saw the produce there, and I have seen some at the shows.

7726. You cannot form any opinion as to whether their blood would be suitable to these mares?—I am certain it would be an advantage to cross these bad-actioned mares.

7727. You think it would or would not be an advantage as far as getting hunters?—I don't think they would be very good for hunters, but I am certain they would be good for market purposes; what the farmers want is a horse that will sell readily, and if they have not action they cannot dispose of them except at a bad price; in some cases they cannot turn them into money.

7728. Would it be an advantage as far as remounts in the army?—I would not say they would. I think they would be rather small for remounts; they want them a good height. I don't think they want great action. I think the action of the blood horse would do for the remounts; they carry a man better than the Hackney produce.

7729. Do you think anything could be done to induce the farmers to breed from their better mares?—About me they are very keen to keep a good, mare, and I think if the half-breds were encouraged; but they have got no encouragement at all, the half-bred stallions.

7730. You think the half-bred stallion is a useful horse?—I am sure of it.

7731. And you think they ought to be admitted to registration?—Certainly. I would have every stallion registered for the purpose of knowing whether he is sound or unsound. I think the greatest evil we have is that there are so many unsound horses, half these high-class horses when they come to 5 years old are whistlers and unsound, a large percentage of mine go wrong and I get very little for them; for one that keeps sound I get a good price that makes up for the misfits.

7732. Mr. CAREW.—You have tried a great many experiments in breeding?—I have.

7733. Have you found after mating a thoroughbred with a highclass mare that the produce was bad?—If the mare was light of bone you would certainly have a weed.

7734. You would remedy it by mating with a half-bred?—Yes.

7735. Have you any produce that would instance that?—I have a great many.

7736. I think you had a mare from which you got nothing by mating with a thoroughbred but the worst style of weed?—Yes; she was a mare by Solon, a very highclass mare; I paid £50 for her as a 2 year old and I put her to the horse Stockinger by Stockwell; she produced a colt that was worth nothing. I tried her with another thoroughbred and the produce was weedy. Then I put her to a carthorse of my own, and she bred 2 colts that at 3 years old I got close on £40 for them; I brought them to Ballyboggan and sold them in their halter; I got £35 for one and £38 for the other. I continued breeding from her, and she bred a mare then by a half-bred horse, and I have kept that mare for a stud mare, and she is a regular gold mine to me; everything she has bred since are fine sellers as hunters.

7737. What did you mate her with?—The best thoroughbred sire I had.

7738. Was she by a sire of your own?—No, a country stallion, Tom Turf, in the Co. Meath.

7739. And by crossing her dam with a half-bred you got this good result, you got a good mare, which by mating with a thoroughbred you got high prices for her produce as hunters?—Yes; they were big and strong.

7740. You approve of breeding from half-breds for market purposes?—I do.

7741. Do you think the pure thoroughbred blood is the best for a hunter?—It is the best decidedly, but you won't get the highest price in the market for it; you may have a very nice horse there and very well bred, and a man will say he is not up to weight enough.

7742. But he is in reality?—Yes, that is my experience. Now I sold a very well-bred horse at the show for £135; the buyers were saying he was not up to more than 13 stone, I thought him a good 14 or 14½ stone horse, but he was of quality and good in all his paces; he was by Old Delight and his dam was by Mallet and his grand-dam by an old Irish well-bred stallion of my father's, great grand-dam was by Old Birdcatcher.

7743. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You said that you thought from seeing the Hackney horses at the Congested District's Stud farm that they would be calculated to improve the mares?—I am sure of it; with low class mares what they would produce would be marketable.

7744. Would you prefer them to what you call a half-bred stallion?—Well, I would prefer him for a mare that would produce hunters.

7745. But I mean for the inferior class mare would you prefer them?—For the very small mares I would.

7746. You prefer the Hackney to the half-bred?—Yes.

7747. Why?—Because to give them action; these mares are small and their produce never will sell well unless they have a bit of action about them, and then they will sell for trappers.

7748. You prefer the Hackney horse and his action to the action of the nice half-bred horse?—Oh, no, I don't say that either; but I say with a mare with little or no action, the class of mares that are about me—a great many of them are small mares, about fourteen hands—they are neither one thing or the other, their produce is very bad, unmarketable; the great action of the Hackney along with their bad action would give a happy medium in the cross.

7749. The extravagant action of the Hackney?—Exactly, and putting one against the other.

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Mr. T. M. Carew.

7750. But you have no experience of the result of that cross yourself?—No.

7751. Have you seen any of these droves of Connemara ponies coming up to Enfield?—I have not seen any of them latterly, some years ago I used to see them coming about the fairs.

7752. You have not seen any latterly?—I have not.

7753. Do you think that the result of this Hackney cross with the ordinary mare would be to get a good sort of a harness horse in fact?—Yes, I think so with these bad mares; I am sure they would be saleable.

7754. You have heard that English carriage horse dealers have strongly condemned the introduction of the Hackney blood?—I have heard it; I am only giving my own opinion.

7755. Mr. CAREW.—You have no experience of it whatever?—No none.

7756. Only what you saw at Mr. Wrench's?—Yes, I saw some very nice horses there.

7757. Mr. WRENCH.—In a fair, Mr. Carew, is not action one of the first things looked for?—It is; I quite agree with you.

7758. Then with regard to the class of horses you try to breed, you think that when a dealer comes to your door you want something with size and substance that looks up to a lot of weight?—Exactly.

7759. Unless you have an animal that looks up to the weight you won't get a good price?—No.

7760. And have you found it necessary to introduce cart blood in order to get that?—Yes, and it turned out very successful.

7761. You bring in a Clydesdale cross and cross again with a thoroughbred?—The Clydesdale is the only thing we have to give us size, I don't know in my district a pure bred Clydesdale except Hannan's, and he is not at all as lubberly or anything like the beasts I saw in the Dublin Show; he is a compact horse, but I am told he is pure bred and has produced very good horses from common mares about.

7762. Do you know whether the Clydesdale blood has been in your country for a long time or not?—It has been up in my country at Rhode for nearly a century; it must be eighty or ninety years ago since the Raits came in there.

7763. How were the Clydesdale horses brought over originally?—The Raits were Scotchmen who came over and brought a great lot of them, they are there still; they took a lot of fine land and farmed very extensively, and brought over all their cart-horses and farm horses, and used to import Clydesdale stallions now and again.

7764. And that is really how the Clydesdale blood came into that district?—That is how the Clydesdale blood came into that district, and most of the big mares about me have a drop of it, being descended from those.

7765. And it is in breeding from that class of mares that you have got the biggest price for the produce?—Yes, when they have a couple of crosses.

7766. And you think that a stout half-bred sire is very much wanted in your part of the country?—I am sure of it.

7767. And you would register those as well as thoroughbreds?—I would register any stallion of any breed, and I would have no hunkersliding about it; I would insist on having on the certificate whether they say he is free from hereditary unsoundness; however he is affected I would have it specified there, and would leave it to the breeder then to make his choice to breed from him or not and not be taking it from the veterinary surgeon.

7768. CHAIRMAN.—What could the small farmer about you afford to pay for the service?—They will give £1 for a good horse; they are very keen about getting a good marketable horse.

7769. Would it pay a man to buy and introduce a thoroughly good half-bred sire such as you would like to see there?—I think it would. I think his subscription would fill—a good stout horse of fair action and good conformation. I don't approve of those big ends and big shoulders and bad middles that I see; I would like to see an animal of good shape, like begets like.

7770. I gather from you that you think that as far as the Hackney blood is concerned it would not be an improvement in the getting of hunters or high class carriage horses?—I think they are not so good for the saddle, carrying a man; but I am certain the bit of action would be of great service commercially.

7771. You think as regards the smaller farmer who has an inferior mare you would get more saleable produce?—Yes; and some of the larger farmers too want it.

7772. Have you ever considered at all whether if the Hackney was once introduced in that way it may not permeate through the country so as to deteriorate the hunters produced there?—I think the people would be keen enough to take care of themselves.

7773. You think it would be possible for men to protect themselves—that it would be easily detected?—I think it would, I think they would be very careful; I cannot very well offer an opinion on that, but I think the majority of farmers are well able to take care of themselves.

7774. We have had very different opinions?—I am sure there is a diversity of opinion.

7775. Have you any suggestions to make to the Commission as to how you think anything could be done to improve the production of horses?—I think we are pretty well off about thoroughbred horses, and I would like to see some encouragement given to the half-bred for the purpose of keeping size and bone and strength in the horses; if you have a good big stout mare and mate her with a half-bred horse you will have plenty of quality in the second generation; no judge, no one could tell that there was any of the dirt in them.

7776. What you think is chiefly wanted is substance?—It is.

7777. It is easy to get the quality back again afterwards?—It is; we want substance.

Mr. H. B. Sampey.

Mr. H. B. SAMPEY, Ballinlough, examined.

7778. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county Roscommon?—Yes, my lord; quite close to Mayo and Galway, just on the borders.

7779. Do you breed horses yourself?—I do; I breed them rather largely.

7780. Do you keep stallions?—No, never have kept a stallion.

7781. What kind of mares have you?—I generally keep one thoroughbred mare, and my half-bred mares fluctuate in numbers. I always breed from young mares, three-year-old mares, and let them run round until they are five-year-old, and then break them; they are at their prime then for the English market; I hunt them myself.

7782. How have you mated these mares?—I have bred from all classes of horses, particularly the thoroughbred, but I have also bred from half-breds and good three-quarter breds:—Lochinvar, a winner at Punchestown, bred at Claremorris by Mr. Coughlan; a horse called Thunder, a kind of Clydesdale, he belonged to Mr. Neary, of Creggs; and I bred some wonderfully staying hunters out of them by very well-bred mares, with a drop of the old Irish mare. I found they were great jumpers, and could stay for ever, with not quite sufficient pace enough for a first-class pack of hounds.

7783. Have you ever used the Hackney sire?—I never have used the Hackney, but I was trying,

through Mr. Wrench, to get a Hackney down in my neighbourhood under the Congested Districts Board, and they had not the money at the time.

7784. Mr. WRENCH.—You were not sufficiently congested?—I could not tell you that, but we wanted a horse in that country, for we have some desperate weeds.

7785. CHAIRMAN.—What is the general kind of mare that the farmers possess?—The very worst ewe-necked, low-shouldered, long-backed mares; they are generally sold to local dealers, and go for pit ponies. You could buy a street full of them as foals for £3 10*s*. All the good mares in the county are in the Strokestown district, and they are in the hands of the large farmers.

7786. What kind of sires do these small farmers use?—We had a brute called Stockton that came over from an English dealer, who swopped him for a good-looking country mare. He was standing at Ballyhaunis.

7787. What kind of a horse was he?—A thoroughbred weed about 15 hands. He had a very long pedigree. I think the service fee was taken out in all kinds—potatoes and everything like that—from the small farmers.

7788. Would you think that a suitable kind of horse to mate with these mares?—Certainly not. I think he was the greatest harm in the country.

7789. What do you think is the most suitable kind of sire?—At the present moment, I think the Hackney for these small mares would be the better, provided the same horse was not left in the country too long—that he got shifted. And I would have great hopes that after a time when the old mares were dropping out the young mares that were springing up would be more suitable for recrossing with the Hackney again and making trappers, provided the same Hackney was not left in the country, that they would not breed too much in and in. And even to the Hackney I would prefer a good half-bred horse, but it is very hard to make any improvement with the mares we have. If there was any way of getting Government assistance to procure good mares in the country, it would be a great improvement. If we had a Government stud there that we could get any kind of sound mare for the farmers it would be a great improvement.

7790. You think the general run of mares in the country is not worth improving?—I don't see how they can be improved. They are absolutely useless—some of them. There are, of course, among the large farmers some very good and excellent mares, and, in one or two cases, among the small farmers, where they have mares that have been known to breed good hunters, they can command a large price for the foals. I know one case where £12 10*s*. was refused for a foal a few days after birth, and, indeed, more money later on.

7791. You think, if it was feasible, the best thing would be to introduce new mares into the country altogether?—I think so. We have plenty of good stallions, except round Ballyhaunis and Ballinlough, but round the good hunting districts, Strokestown and Roscommon, we have very good horses. I think we want a very extensive licensing scheme for the stallions.

7792. Would you advocate such a system of licensing stallions as would practically prevent unsound stallions from serving at all?—I would not go so far as that; we had a horse down there—"Morgan"—he was theoretically unsound; he was a bad roarer. Well I bred by him a very, very nice mare, and have her at stud, and she has not the slightest taint of a roarer, and I never heard of any of his progeny being unsound. We had another chestnut horse there who bred a lot of good hunters, and he suffered, I believe, from laminitis; he bred a champion wall jumper at the Dublin Show; but any man that had a horse like that that was theoretically unsound, but was valuable, I would make him pay certainly a large fee for his license. I would give a free license to any man that had a thoroughly sound horse, and any man that had an unsound horse let him pay for his license.

7793. Would you increase the license in proportion to the unsoundness of the horse?—I would not say that; but anything that did not pass the veterinary surgeon. I would make him pay £20 for his license.

7794. Would it not be rather difficult to do that; it is easy enough to say you won't license a horse unless he is passed sound, but rather difficult to say "I will license him if he is theoretically unsound, but appears not likely to transmit it"?—If he did not pass the veterinary surgeon I would leave it then to the owner; if the owner considered he was worth keeping even to serve his own mares it would be worth paying for, and if he did not he would castrate him or do away with him. But I think it would be hard lines if you had a thoroughbred horse that was breeding winners that you would have to do away with him out of the country, or prevent your friends breeding from him.

7795. But you would not allow him to serve for money without paying for his license?—I would not; a man would not pay a large fine for a horse unless he was worth something.

7796. Has the Royal Dublin Society's scheme done any good in your part of the country?—I should say it did; it has been the means of bringing in one or two good horses in our country; before that we had a very mediocre lot.

7797. Have you any suggestions to make in respect of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—No, my lord, I think as far as the Royal Dublin Society can do they have done up to the present, they have done their level best, and as far as very skilful men could do.

7798. Have you any idea at all as to any possible way in which, by the aid of Government, or in any other way, suitable mares could be introduced into the country—a better class of mares?—I think if there was a Government stud got up in Connaught—suppose there were 50 or 60 of the very typical hunter mares procured, and horses like Yard-Arm, of the Compton Stud Company, and the fillies as three-year-olds were Government branded and distributed among the farmers at cost price on the three years' system—that would be a great improvement. Of course the colts could be put up for auction, and any man that wanted a good hunter would go there first, and if he was not suitable for a hunter he would make a harness horse.

7799. The farmer undertaking not to sell the mare?—I would not allow him; I would so brand her that she could not be exported, the same way as the Australian horses; I would brand her and number her, and keep a register how she was bred—I think it would be a great improvement in the country. But it is ridiculous to talk of subsidising mares in a county where we have not got the mares to subsidise.

7800. Would you be in favour of a large scheme of registration, registering mares and foals?—I certainly would register the mares, and I would register the yearlings.

7801. How do you think that could be carried out?—They could be registered by the local committees that are appointed at present under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

7802. Would a local committee be able to do that?—I should think they could if there was a paid secretary to aid—you could get a man for £70 or £80 a year that would be very glad to undertake the job.

7803. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You think there should be a Government stud farm in which these mares should be bred for distribution among the farmers?—Yes, on the lines of the Hungarian stud farms where all our good mares have gone to.

7804. What did you mean to convey when you spoke of some mares with a drop of the old Irish blood in them?—I have at the present moment a strain of old Irish blood, old Chitchat and Smallhopes.

7805. Why do you call that the old Irish blood

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any more than Favo or Victoricus?—My father had it for the last 40 years.

7806. What you mean by old Irish blood is a mare got some years ago by a thoroughbred horse—Chitchat was got by Boadicea?—The Chitchat we had was a Magpie horse, bred by Mr. Waters of Monasterevan, I think; but all the old mares there are three-quarter bred, they have all a touch of Will Scarlet, and in a great many cases of Tom Steele, a half-bred horse by Smallhopes; in nearly every good hunter in our country the name of Chitchat or Smallhopes crops up in the pedigree.

7807. I understood you to say for the improvement of the ordinary horse in the country you would prefer a good half-bred to a Hackney?—If I could get a half-bred horse to my liking, that is well-balanced, shortlegged, good shouldered, three-quarter bred horse, I would prefer him to the Hackney, but it is very hard to get that stamp of typical horse; every good colt is nearly castrated as a yearling; it is very hard to get one of them unless a man keeps one for racing purposes, and when he has done racing he may go to the stud, but it is more difficult to get a good half-bred than a good hunter sire.

7808. Do you know much about the South?—No my connection is nearly all with the west; I go into the congested districts portion; I buy a good deal of cattle in Swinford, and that part of the country.

7809. It is not the fashion in Roscommon to keep well-bred colts uncut?—No, they are nearly all cut as yearlings.

7810. Mr. WRENCH.—Is horse-breeding a considerable industry with these small farmers in Connaught?—It used to be, but I think it is dying out greatly; I think they are getting disgusted with the game, the animals have been so bad, they have hundreds on hands; there are hundreds of horses at present in Connaught that you cannot absolutely sell. In the fair of Boyle and in the fair of Athlone I suppose next January you will see hundreds of them that are absolutely worthless; they cannot be cashed; they used to be bought for light van work in London, but the Argentine horse is cutting against them.

7811. Is it not very hard to realise how bad mares can be until you see them in the hands of these small farmers?—No person could believe it until you saw them—until you regularly go down and look at them it does not dawn on you how bad a mare can be.

7812. There are very few left of the better class?—Any good mare or any of the good pony type is either picked up the foreigner or large farmer.

7813. Is the land very bad in these districts?—No; I would not say the land is bad in Roscommon.

7814. Take the Swinford district?—It is very bad down there and round Kilkelly; it is all mountain or lake.

7815. Requires something very hardy to live there?—It wants to be something very hardy; they are not able to feed them in it.

7816. Do you think from what you know of the mares in the hands of the small farmers in Connaught that there is much danger of their produce finding its way into the hands of men who now breed high class hunters?—I should not think there is the slightest danger, they are altogether a different breed; you might as well say you would hunt on a mule as to hunt on one of them. I don't think there is the slightest danger of their mixing; no man will ever try to breed a hunter from the miserable weeds down in that country.

7817. Are not the more intelligent people of Roscommon very much more enlightened now on the subject of breeding horses since this discussion has taken place?—I think they are.

7818. And they would be very careful what they bred from?—Very well able to take care of themselves. Any man who goes to breed a hunter generally knows what he is about. If he does not he soon learns.

7819. If you wished to buy such a half-bred sire as you have described now do you know where to find him?—No; I would find it very difficult; that is why I have great hopes out of a Government stud. If they left the colts untouched until two years old you could pick the best of them and let them run round as country sires. I don't think a good stamp of half-bred horse exists in the West of Ireland, except in a few isolated cases.

7820. CHAIRMAN.—You don't mean he does not exist anywhere?—Well, I don't know. I only speak from my own experience. I should not say that about Kildare or Meath.

7821. You spoke just now about the Government breeding establishments in Hungary. Do you know anything about them yourself?—Except to read articles in the "Field."

7822. You said "where all our best mares have gone to"?—Nearly all the good mares I have sold I have sold to foreigners

7823. More lately than formerly?—I think there is just as good a demand now for the foreign market as ever there was.

7824. You think it is the case throughout the country, or in that part of the country that you know, that many of the best mares have been bought for abroad?—I think all the best mares, except in cases where a man could afford to keep one of the old strain or a strain he thought a lot of, he kept her for breeding purposes, but everything else was sold that could be turned into cash. I think the Land agitation, too, had a good deal to do with it, because when rents did not come in men had to realise their horses.

7825. You think no man would undertake to breed a hunter from the miserable weeds in that part of the country?—I don't think there is the slightest fear. If he does he will never try it again.

7826. But if these miserable weeds were improved by the introduction of Hackney blood, would they not be likely to get about the country?—Even if they did would it not be a great thing to improve it?

7827. That is another question. Assume, for the sake of argument, that the Hackney blood is considered objectionable in a part of the country where they breed hunters and harness horses, do you think there is no danger if these mares were improved by the introduction of Hackney blood that they would find their way into districts producing hunters?—I don't think they would.

7828. Why should they not?—They are altogether of a different type. Any man who goes to breed a hunter would never take a Hackney as a standard.

7829. No; but I am talking of the produce?—I would surmise that the produce would have the type of the Hackney.

7830. And that the produce would show that type so strongly that no man would breed from them?—I certainly think they would. Of course if I could get a three-quarter bred horse to my liking I would prefer him to the Hackney.

7831. Anything further you would like to say to the Commission?—Nothing; only I think the great thing would be to try and improve the mares. They talk of subsidising owners to keep their mares. They would want to put them in some way to get a mare to start with. They cannot start from nothing. The things they have now are useless for any purpose.

Mr. Richard Flynn, Tulsk, examined.

7832. Chairman.—You also live in the County Roscommon?—Yes, my lord.

7833. In the same part of the county as the last witness?—Oh, no; I live near Tulsk, in the middle of Roscommon, the richest part of Roscommon.

7834. Have you experience yourself in horse breeding?—Oh, yes, I am very fond of that; my brother kept a large number of mares.

7835. Have you found it profitable?—If bred properly, certainly.

7836. What class of horses do you breed yourself?—Sometimes from a thoroughbred to an Irish draught mare if you could get them, but they are very nearly extinct. Some of the best horses I had in the Dublin Show were got by half-bred horses. It is not the half-bred described so because it has a stain, but a half-bred between a thoroughbred and the Irish draught mare.

7837. Have you bred from any other kind of sires?—None except the thoroughbred and half-bred. The highest jump on record a horse called Shaunree carried me over in the Dublin Show, and he was got by a half-bred horse out of an Irish draught mare; he is down in Kildare still at Lord Drogheda's place.

7838. Do the farmers breed much about you?—Yes, they do.

7839. The small farmers?—The twenty-acre farmers.

7840. What kind of animals do they produce?—Hunter foals as a rule, and foals that go to London as carriage horses; they sell their foals nearly always to that class of people.

7841. At what age do they sell them?—As weanlings.

7842. Where do they go to?—Kept in the country to make hunters of them.

7843. What class of mares do the small farmers keep to breed from?—As a rule these clean-legged draught mares. There is an old Irish draught mare down at Tulsk—I know she was bought for £12 for I bought her myself at one time—I think she has bred thousands of pounds worth of hunter stock, and her foal sold as a weanling this year for £15, and she is an old mare, I daresay twenty-four or twenty-five.

7844. To what kind of sires do they send their draught mares?—To a thoroughbred or a good half-bred. The best sire required and sure to get the most suitable stock is a sire got by a thoroughbred horse out of a hunter mare or Irish draught mare; you have substance and quality, action and endurance, they are very saleable too.

7845. Are there plenty of suitable stallions in your country?—There are, I think, good stallions enough, and plenty of good fillies too if they were kept there.

7846. Are they sold away?—They are always sold away.

7847. Where?—Taken away as troopers to France or Germany.

7848. Do you consider your part of the country naturally suited for breeding horses?—The best in the world; real limestone; they have all big legs, plenty of muscle; they seem to grow with very little care; the land is wonderful land to make bone.

7849. Can you suggest any way in which these fillies could be kept in the country?—I don't know any way except to give substantial prizes. They don't get very much now. Where they used to get £40 they only get £20 or £25 now for good ones. I think it would be very easy to keep them with substantial prizes, and provide them good half-bred sires, it is not the thoroughbred with a stain in it. I heard Mayboy described as a half-bred—that is not the sort I mean, but one got out of a hunter mare or Irish draught. They are up to plenty of good weight, lots of bone, fine long shoulder, good necks and feet.

7850. Do you think the produce of horses has improved in the country or not?—We have a lot of very bad mares, but there are some very good ones, and I would say that they are a bit better now than they were some years ago. There are some very fine brood mares, but some awfully bad ones too.

7851. You think the produce is better?—Oh, yes, as a whole. About seven years ago they were in a very bad state indeed.

7852. How do you account for that improvement?—Several good sires came into the country, and some people sent their fillies to the stud.

7853. Mr. La Touche.—When you say the old Irish cart mare, do you mean any particular breed?—The Irish draught was a breed in itself, I think; they were a sort of slow hunters with clean hard legs; could step well.

7854. And there was a regular breed of the sires and dams?—Oh, yes; they could jump well and gallop fairly fast and were never tired; they were a real genuine Irish breed.

7855. Would you approve of the scheme of the last witness with reference to Government studs to breed fillies?—I think if the prizes were given to the people to keep the fillies there would be no need for Government studs at all.

7856. Have you any experience of Hackney horses?—No, sir, except to see them. I was judge in Derry and I saw a very beautiful horse, a Hackney—Mr. Archdale's—and there was a very fine hunter sire there called Erin's Fraud. I knew the qualities of the hunter sire, and I felt a good deal distressed I could not give two prizes, I liked the Hackney so much. But there are so many stories about them—people who use and breed them like them, people who have not bred them abuse them.

7857. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney stallion in the western districts is likely to have any effect on hunter breeding?—I cannot say, because the legs of the Hackney pleased me.

7858. Do you think the introduction of any particular breed of soft blood into the western parts of Ireland is likely to affect the hunter breeding in your part of Roscommon?—Certainly; if you breed any particular breed and produce too soft stock that would be sure to get into the country. But I don't see why people who wish to breed Hackneys should not be allowed to breed them. In the North of Ireland, Belfast and Derry, they like them well.

7859. Suppose, just for the sake of argument, that they were detrimental to hunter blood, would you still permit them to be brought in?—Certainly not; if they were detrimental I would not allow them to be bred.

7860. Mr. Wrench.—You used to jump your horse in Kildare Street when the Show was held there?—Yes, sir, and in Ball's Bridge too.

7861. You began in Kildare Street?—I began in Kildare Street.

7862. When you had to jump 6ft?—6ft 1½in. I cleared on this horse by the half-bred horse—he was by Tom Steele.

7863. And you bred him yourself?—My father bred him

7864. Mr. Carew.—What weight were you then?—11st.

7865. Mr. Wrench.—You have had a great many good jumping horses in different shows?—Yes.

7866. And most of your horses have been bred by a half-bred sire?—Certainly, and the very best in the world.

7867. Would you be in favour of registering these half-bred sires?—Yes, and encourage them in every way possible, for that is just what is wanted. I saw a long discussion some years ago on this point, and I was making up my mind to go into the battle field, but family affliction left me idle—I had my proofs ready. Those people who talked about fast runs did not know how in the world the horse they rode was

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bred; the very best I ever saw in the hunting field were by these half-bred sires; they are hardy and clever and never put a foot astray.

7868. So when people talk about there being nothing like the thoroughbred sire and the good horses only being got by the thoroughbred sires, they are talking rubbish?—Most fallacious. There was a man down in our country at Ballinasloe fair that used to coin pedigrees and sell horses as thoroughbreds. His memory failed him one day, and he asked his groom to tell this gentleman what the horse was got by. "Got by Major Orr out of Jeanette," said the groom. The English gentleman thanked him and gave him a half-sovereign. "Major Orr" was not the sire at all, he was a wicked mule.

7869. Are there many Clydesdale horses in your country?—There was one in Elphin; I don't think he would suit there.

7870. You would not have any cart blood at all?—I would not have him at all; he is a big soft horse made of bran and buttermilk.

7871. You don't think he is wanted for the farmers?—No; he would destroy them more than the Hackney would a great deal.

7872. Are there many horses sold for troopers in Roscommon?—Hundreds of them.

7873. Are they bought by the dealers?—By Manly or Daly.

7874. Do you think it would be an improvement if they could be bought direct from the farmers by Government?—Certainly; if they got good premiums to keep them on, had a foal out of them first, then you would soon find with a good crossing of the half-bred horse that you would have a substantial horse with endurance, and not these big soft-legged Clydesdales, greasy-heeled, if you trot.

7875. Mr. La Touche asked you if Hackneys were bred from soft blood they would do harm to hunters—if there was a breed of horses of proved soft blood that would do harm to hunters you would be against having them in the country and you said "yes"?—I said I should be against anything that would produce bad stock.

7876. If, on the other hand, there were Hackneys that were bred from good hard blood with plenty of thoroughbred blood in them, would you be against them then?—Certainly not.

7877. Chairman.—I think you told us that you don't really know anything at all about Hackney blood?—So, I have said, except to see them in the show ring.

7878. You have seen one Hackney that you thought a good horse?—That is all, but I have heard them opposed by people who knew nothing about them.

7879. Is there anything more you would like to say to the Commission?—No; except to keep on giving premiums to the young mares and fillies and get some half-bred sires, and I think it would be very easy to bring the horses back to a standard better than ever they were. Roscommon I suppose can produce better horses than any place in the world; if the English people only knew Roscommon and started stud farms there they would have superior horses to "Red Heart" over and over again.

7880. Mr. Wrench.—You exhibit very often in the Dublin Shows?—Always.

7881. You know at present you can only show mares in foal or with foal at foot to a registered thoroughbred stallion?—I do.

7882. Would you approve of mares being allowed to be shown in foal or with foal at foot to a half-bred stallion?—Oh, surely; I would encourage the half-bred in every way.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

FIFTEENTH DAY—FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4TH, 1896

Dec. 4, 1896.

Present:—The Earl of DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, Mr. J. L. CAREW, M.P., Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, Mr. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. J. F. BOMFORD, Drumlargan, Kilcock, Co. Meath, examined

Mr. J. F. Bomford.

7883. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Bomford, you live in the county Meath, do you not?—Yes, sir.

7884. And you have been personally occupied in breeding horses?—Yes.

7885. For some time?—For a great many years.

7886. What class of horse do you breed?—I was breeding hunters or carriage horses, cross-bred horses, and Clydesdale horses, and a few thoroughbreds.

7887. You have bred, you say, Clydesdales—pure bred Clydesdale horses?—Pure bred Clydesdales.

7888. And for what purpose did you breed them?—I bred them for my own use and for sale. I kept stallions sometimes and sold the mares. I generally sold the colts for stallions, in fact, always.

7889. You keep a thoroughbred yourself?—I keep a thoroughbred stallion.

7890. Any half-bred stallions?—No; I never had a half-bred.

7891. Only a thoroughbred and a Clydesdale?—Only a thoroughbred and a Clydesdale. I have no Clydesdale stallion at present.

7892. And what kind of mares do you breed from for the hunters and high class harness horses?—Well, pretty well-bred looking strong mares, with one or two crosses of the thoroughbred in them.

7893. You put them to a thoroughbred?—Put them to a thoroughbred.

7894. Have you crossed the Clydesdale with the thoroughbred at all?—Yes, not with the intention of breeding for a cross. It was when the mares had become too old to send them off to the stallion. I just put my own horse on them then not to have them idle—working mares. I also crossed a thoroughbred mare on one occasion with a pure Clydesdale horse for the same purpose.

7895. And with what result?—Well, I was very much surprised at the result in that case, because the cross-bred foal became an extremely good hunter.

7896. Is that the only occasion on which you tried that experiment?—I bred two that way from that mare, a colt and a filly. One of them I did not care about, the colt; he was under-bred looking; I sold him young and I don't know what became of him. The mare turned out very well, and two foals of hers by a thoroughbred horse have turned out particularly good too. In fact one of them won a couple of races last year.

7897. That foal would be by a thoroughbred out of the mare?—Out of a mare got by a pure Clydesdale stallion out of a thoroughbred mare.

7898. A great many horses I suppose are bred in your part of the country?—A great number.

7899. Are they mostly hunters?—Mostly first class hunters and chasers—steeplechase horses

7900. How are they generally, thoroughbred horses or what?—Got by thoroughbred horses as a rule.

7901. How would the exceptions be bred in general?—The small farmers breed horses from all sorts of stallions. I think it depends greatly on if he happens to be near to them and can be got cheap.

7902. Are they well off in your part of the country for sires?—Oh yes, there are some very good sires.

7903. Thoroughbred sires?—Thoroughbred sires.

7904. What kind of fees do they charge?—They go from £3 to £50, I think.

7905. I don't mean for breeding thoroughbred stock, but the kind of sires the farmer would put his mare to?—I think the thoroughbreds used that way would average about £5. I think that would be the average.

7906. Are there any half-bred sires?—There are, a few.

7907. Are they popular, do you think?—I have known some of them that were.

7908. Should you approve of a good half-bred sire yourself for getting hunters?—I think what they produce is very uncertain. It sometimes seems to take one way and sometimes to take another. I know that was my own experience. You cannot rely upon getting any fixed type. But I have seen some very good horses got by half-bred horses. Of course, some so-called half-breds are practically thoroughbred.

7909. Are there any Clydesdale stallions, except that one you had, in the district?—Yes, there is one that is called a pure-bred Clydesdale. I do not know whether he is or not. He is not a good horse. And there is another in the district that they say is a Shire horse; but I do not know much about him. He is near the Enfield side.

7910. What kind of mares do the small farmers generally have?—The mares they cannot sell I think.

7911. Do they breed profitably out of them?—I don't think they do; I think it is a dead loss.

7912. Why do they continue breeding?—I don't know; I could not answer that. I am sure they breed at a loss. I judge that from what they tell me they get for the young horses. It would appear to me that it would not rear them. It has not been always so.

7913. What is your opinion about breeding from two-year-old fillies?—The only times I have ever tried it, it was very successful. The first time I ever tried it—I think it was 25 years ago—I put a two-year-old Clydesdale mare, a well-grown one, to a Clydesdale horse, and I sent her down as a brood mare, to the Royal Agricultural Show at Galway; she showed against a lot of aged mares, and she won the first prize; and the colt she had won two first prizes when I exhibited it, and I got a big price for him—very nearly £100—as a three-year-old. I have also tried it with half-bred mares, and they did very well. I think it retards the growth: I think she takes a year longer to come to her full formation and strength, but I don't think it prevents her from growing to full size if she gets time.

7914. The advisability of doing so would depend, perhaps, to a certain extent, on the character of the soil, climate, and things of that kind. It may be permissible in some places and not in others?—I don't think it would at all do to put a half-starved or badly grown two-year-old mare to a horse. I should

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think that would destroy her. It is the only way I see to induce the farmers keep good mares.

7915. Do you think that the farmers generally about you are alive to the necessity of mating their mares suitably?—The smaller farmers I don't think are at all.

7916. You say that you think the small farmer breeds from a mare that he cannot sell—do you think they are more inclined to sell their good mares than they used?—I cannot say that they are, except, perhaps, that they want the money more than they used.

7917. You do not know whether there is any greater foreign demand for our mares than used to be the case?—I have no reason to say that there is. I do not know.

7918. And do you know at all whether the price is as good as it used to be for what I may call the inferior style of horse?—I think the price for the inferior style of horse for the last two or three years has been as low as ever I remember. I think the price for a good horse is as good at present as ever it was. I think size is wanted more than it used to be.

7919. The demand is more?—I think there is more demand in proportion for the size than there used to be, especially in harness horses. I do not think there is a similar demand for small hacks, particularly during the last few years, and I attribute it very much to cycling. I know numbers of men, post-car keepers, who do not keep anything like the number of horses they used. I am not speaking of my own district but of all Ireland. I have a great deal to do with that class of people all through Ireland, and I find very generally that numbers of them do not keep half the horses that they used five years ago, and they generally attribute it to cycling, tramcars, and that sort of thing.

7920. The demand for size is increasing—how do you think that the requisite size can best be attained?—I think if you encourage any stallions you ought to encourage stallions that have size, or stallions that are known to impart a good deal of size to their offspring.

7921. Do you think that the system of registration of stallions under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has done any good?—I think it undoubtedly has; I think it has enabled men to select a sound stallion.

7922. You think a suitable half-bred sire is more likely to impart size and substance than the ordinary thoroughbred sire that is standing about the country?—Yes, if he is a bigger and stronger horse.

7923. And would you approve of the registration of sound and approved half-bred sires?—I think it might be of use. Let people use their own own judgment whether they suited their mares or not. I do not see in breeding hunters how you are to keep breeding from thoroughbred horses without turning them into thoroughbreds altogether, and there are not very many men who can hunt a thoroughbred except a very strong thoroughbred.

7924. Your experience of the cross of the Clydesdale has been very favourable?—I think I made more money by breeding Clydesdales than any other class of horse.

7925. I do not mean pure-bred Clydesdales but a cross?—In the one instance I have given you. I am inclined to think that that was an exceptional instance.

7926. Have you any experience of crossing with any other blood,—Hackney blood for instance?—No, I have not. I crossed a pure-bred Clydesdale mare with a thoroughbred horse and the result in that case was that the first foal was a very fine colt with very fine action, a handsome carriage horse, and an excellent fencer, in fact he was a good hunter too, and I sold him at a good price for a carriage horse, and the next foal, a full brother, was more of a cart horse. Anyone looking at the two would not suppose that they were brothers at all, and I didn't get half the money for him.

7927. Have you any definite opinion as to the relative importance of the sire or the dam—some witnesses attached more importance to endeavouring to secure sound stallions throughout the country; others seemed to attach more importance to endeavouring to improve the breed of mares—what do you think about that?—I would attach much more importance to the stallion for the simple reason that he will produce a great many more foals, but I do not suppose that the produce will take more after the stallion than after the mare provided they are both equally purely bred. My opinion from breeding different kinds of animals is that whichever animal is the purest bred and has the longest pedigree will be the most impressive whether male or female. I never could find that the male was more impressive than the female unless he was purely bred and she was not. And the more in and in bred an animal is the more impressive he is either for good or evil.

7928. Could you suggest any way in which the farmers could be induced to keep their best mares for breeding from instead of selling them?—I don't know of any practical way.

7929. Mr. La Touche.—Would you approve of the idea, Mr. Bomford, that all stallions should be licensed, and that those that were unsound should be put under heavy penalties before they are permitted to serve?—It has been my opinion that the only way to improve the breed of horses in Ireland is to discourage the breeding of bad ones as much as possible, and bad stallions; and the only way that I can see of coming at that is by having a tax upon all stallions and not allowing any horse to be let to the public without paying a tax.

7930. I suppose you would permit the tax to be remitted in cases where the stallion would be sound and suitable?—I dare say that would be a very good thing; but I think if there was a tax it might be a very small one. I don't think it would be any hardship upon anybody; quite the reverse. I think it would stamp out the horses that perhaps do the most harm. I know it is the habit of many now who keep stallions to have two or three stallions to suit their different class of customers and the prices. They have one good one for the good breeders, and they have generally a cheap Jack for the farmers, who do not care what they breed from as long as they get it cheap. If there was a tax it would tend to make them keep only one, and to keep the best.

7931. You think the mares stand in need of improvement?—I am sure they do.

7932. How would you suggest that they should be improved?—Well, the only practical way that I know is to encourage breeding from young mares, because I think if a man finds a young mare breeding well he will probably stick to breeding from her.

7933. How do you think that that encouragement should be afforded—in what manner?—I think by giving more prizes for young brood mares.

7934. Do you think that £5 and £10 prizes would be sufficient to encourage the farmer and induce him to keep the mare?—I think it would. But the worst of it is that the small farmers who keep the worst class of mares really do not exhibit. It costs them too much, and shows are too far away.

7935. Do you think, in your experience, that the ordinary light-weight driving horse is very much depreciated in value?—I certainly think he is for the last few years.

7936. And possibly, with the introduction of motor cars to assist the bicycle, there will be a still further depreciation?—I don't know that the motor cars will interfere as much as cycling, which is not only holding its own, but increasing; and I think it likely to do so, not for amusement, but practically, for use.

7937. You don't see any reason to imagine that the

breeding of light-weight small harness horses is likely to be ever a profitable enterprise?—I would not like to go so far as to say that, but at present I think it looks like it.

7938. Have you any experience of Hackneys?—No, I know nothing of them, except what I have seen at shows.

7939 Have you any experience of the congested districts?—Yes; I know the districts, but I have had nothing to do with the working of the scheme. Of course I saw their ponies when going through the districts, and I asked them how they get on, and asked them if they were bred from the Government horses or what.

7940. Have you seen any of the produce coming down in droves to the county Meath?—No; not to my knowledge.

7941. You have no personal experience of the produce of the Government horse in the congested districts?—I have seen the foals on the mountains.

7942. The foals?—Yes, both in Leitrim and Galway.

7943. Have you seen two-year-olds and three-year-olds?—I have seen two-year-olds, I never saw a three-year-old.

7944. Do you think that they benefit the strain of horses there?—I saw a drove of them very near the Twelve Pins—the first lot I saw, and I was able to pick out all the foals provided they told me the truth afterwards, and were not flattering my judgment, I was able to pick out the foals got by the Congested Districts' sires, and I picked them out as the best with the best action, and they said I was right in every instance. However, they might say that to please me.

7945. Were these foals or two-year-olds?—There were some two-year-olds and some foals.

7946. Mr. WRENCH.—You know the whole of Ireland?—Pretty nearly.

7947. And the North particularly well?—I know the North very well.

7948. Do you think that the different parts of the country require different treatment?—Oh, certainly.

7949. You would not suggest the same horse for Meath as for the North of Ireland?—Decidedly not.

7950. Do you think that the different breeds of horse, the different stamps of horse can be raised in Ireland generally without interfering with each other?—I certainly think so; I do not see why they should interfere.

7951. Do you think there is any danger of the big breeders in Meath breeding from ponies that come up from Connemara and the Twelve Pins—breeding hunters?—No, I think not, breeding hunters.

7952. What class of farmers breed the best horses in Meath?—The large graziers.

7953. Not the small farmers?—Not the small farmers.

7954. No better judges of horses, I suppose, in the world than the Meath graziers?—I fancy they are as good as any going.

7955. And no better mares?—No better mares. I have not seen them better; I have seen them very good in other counties too.

7956. And no better land?—I would not say that Meath is the best land for raising horses in Ireland.

7957. What would you say is the best land in Ireland?—Where there is more limestone. I think I was in a better district the day before yesterday, down in Roscommon; I think it grows every animal larger.

7958. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Roscommon does?—Wherever there is limestone, grows sheep and bullocks larger. I rear a great deal of young stock myself, and though they are very good and in very good condition, I think that in land not so good for fattening purposes they would grow quicker; of course, if you feed a horse with oats you make up for all that, and so the best horses are fed with oats in Meath.

7959. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said you would be in favour of licensing all stallions?—Yes; I don't think any stallions ought to be let to mares without a licence.

7960. You have seen it suggested that every horse should be registered, mares and all?—I have read it; I cannot see the object of registering the mares.

7961. Do you think it would be a practicable scheme to carry out?—If you register the mares you would find very great difficulty indeed, in preventing a man slipping in another mare instead of the registered one.

7962. Do you think there are many large graziers and breeders in Meath who could tell you the breed of their mares now?—I am sure they could; most of them know the pedigrees of their mares.

7963. How they are bred?—I am sure that those who breed really good ones could tell you.

7964. By the records?—By the records.

7965. Would you be in favour of establishing a Hunters' Improvement Society in Ireland?—I don't know the details, but I dare say it would do a great deal of good.

7966. You don't know the work of the Hunters' Improvement Society in England?—I do not.

7967. But if such a society were started, you think the material would be in the hands of the big breeders in Meath for giving the pedigrees of their mares?—I think so, for a good many crosses.

7968. CHAIRMAN.—You know the whole of Ireland pretty well?—Yes, I know it all.

7969. And I think you attributed the falling off in the demand for the lighter description of harness horse a good deal to the diffusion of the bicycles?—I say that is the principal reason—what you call the hack horse.

7970. Do you think there is any danger that the introduction of the motor cars will interfere with the trade in the heavier kind of horse; the tram horse and the dray horse?—I suppose it would. Well, I don't know about the dray horse, but I should think it would interfere with the cross-bred draught horse that would be fit for a tram car, but after all that is nothing like such a large class of horse as the hacks.

7971. Speaking generally of Ireland what class of horse do you think the country is best suited to produce?—I could not confine it to any one class. I think there is a great part of Ireland that is not at all fit to produce hunters; in fact, I would go so far as to say, the greater part of it. There are some counties in Connaught, and a great number of counties in Munster, and a great part of Leinster, where undoubtedly they can produce hunters as good as anywhere else in the world, I suppose; but a great part of Ireland is not fit to produce hunters at all, I think.

7972. And do you think that anything could make it fit—any mixture of the blood for instance?—I do not. I cannot see the use of encouraging some small farmers to breed horses at all. I think it is an unkindness to them.

7973. I would like to know your opinion on this point as to whether it is or is not the case, that where the production of hunters or high class carriage horses is concerned, Ireland has not got a reputation for superiority over any other country—is the Irish hunter thought more of than the hunter produced anywhere else?—I should think there is no doubt about that. I know how they speak of them in England, and I know when I have been in England I have been offered a mount as a luxury on a horse from my own country as the greatest inducement; and I have heard them say that they could not get a horse, except an Irish horse, that they cared for in the best Shires in England, in Leicestershire and that part of the country; and I have heard numbers say they would not ride anything but an Irish horse if they could get him.

7974. Do you think we have the same natural advantages in the production of any other kind of

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horse—do you think we could breed a heavy draught horse, or a cart horse, or an ordinary agricultural horse?—I think the same thing that makes bone in the hunters, and all that, would decidedly do it for all other horses.

7975. How do you think that we have established this superiority in the production of hunters?—As far as the highly-bred horses are concerned, I think a great deal of it comes from this—that in England the thoroughbred horse is set to work when he is two years old. Hitherto in Ireland the habit has been to let that horse mature until he is four or five, and I think that is one reason why the Irish horse, as a rule, beats the English horse in steeplechases. I think the same class of Irish horse that goes and wins the Grand National in England would have been running for races when he was two years old, and would have been broken down when the Irish horse begins to win. I am sure it brings on unsoundness to work them before they are fully developed.

7976. What I want to get from you if you have got any opinion on it is, assuming that you are quite right that the price of what I may call the inferior horse has greatly declined, and as far as I can judge is likely to keep down, taking Ireland all over, what kind of horse is the most profitable for the country to produce?—Where they can produce a high-class hunter unquestionably it is the most profitable, because the prices are so very much larger.

7977. And some parts of the country are adapted to producing them, and some parts of the country are not?—That is my opinion.

7977A. I think you said you had no experience yourself of Hackney blood—I do not know whether you have got any opinion as to what the effect of the introduction of Hackney blood would be upon the production of hunters?—Provided it had got mixed with the hunters?

7977B. Yes, certainly?—Well, I think from what I have seen of the Hackney at shows—I think they are a very nice style of horse, but I think they would be an unsuitable cross to serve mares for the purpose of breeding hunters from those mares, and for two reasons. The principal reason is that what you want to add is size, and the Hackney, although he is a very stout horse, is not calculated to add size to the mares. And the only other reason that I say that he would be unsuitable for breeding hunters from—I may be very wrong in it—but looking at their action at shows, although it is beautiful road action, I think it is not field action, it is too high. But it is only from looking at them going around the ring that I have come to form that opinion. I may be entirely wrong.

7978. Assuming for the sake of argument that you are right, and that the Hackney strain would be prejudicial to the production of hunters, do you think if any large quantity of Hackney blood was introduced into the North or West of Ireland, that it would do any harm?—I don't think it would do any harm to the best class of hunters, because I think the men who breed the best class of hunters would be able to judge the mares suitable to breed from.

7979. You think they would be able to detect the Hackney?—I think they would, the vast majority of them. If there was anything in the mare to unfit her for breeding hunters I think they would detect it at once. I would be disappointed in them if they didn't.

7980. You do not think that the Hackney blood would be likely to gradually spread all over the country?—I don't think it would. I don't see why the breeds should mix at all. There is one suggestion I would like to make—I think you sometimes talk about the breeding of ponies and the improvement of them—I think if any means could be taken to stop the importation of Iceland ponies into Ireland it would be a good thing for the breeding of Irish ponies.

7981. Do a number of them come?—An immense number of them come in. I never saw one of them yet that was not the very worst possible description of animal, and I know that up in the North, in Antrim, it has gone so far that some men have got these Iceland ponies, and have run them up on the hills and sold them as Cushendall ponies, which has given the Cushendall ponies a very bad name, and I have heard that they have begun to breed them.

7982. Where have they landed these Iceland ponies?—In Dublin very much, and in Belfast.

7983. What age are they?—I think they come over two-year-olds and three-year-olds.

7984. What do they sell for?—Something very small. I think they are brought over for ballast—or they get them for nothing.

7985. What becomes of them?—Mr. Gavin Low has large sales in Dublin of them very frequently, and people get them for very little, thinking they are getting a great bargain. They are generally very sick of them before they have them a month, and they cannot get rid of them. That is my experience.

7986. Do they spread about the country?—They spread very much.

7987. You think it is a bad thing?—I think it is very bad for Irish ponies.

7988. Why don't the people protect themselves from them?—I think the reason is that they can buy them so cheap. You get a big strong looking pony for some very small price; you think he will turn into a good one; when you feed him.

7989. What is the matter with them, why do you object to them?—I don't think they have a single good point about them. They have no action, no shoulders, no strength whatever.

7990. Do they breed from them in this country?—I fear they do now. I did not know it until lately. They have been breeding them in Cushendall, and spreading them. They are the very worst description of animal I ever saw.

7991. How would you propose to stop their importation by legislation?—I would leave that to the legislators, and I think it would be a very good thing if it could be done.

7992. Lord Ashtown.—That would only affect the pony breeding?—That is all.

7993. Would you check pony breeding, provided it suited the ordinary farmer?—Well, I thought there was a good deal of effort being made to improve the Connemara ponies, and that is the reason I mentioned it at all. I have no experience of pony breeding myself.

7994. Mr. La Touche.—Is it your experience then that Iceland ponies have permeated different parts of Ireland from Iceland—you don't think that the ponies of Connemara are likely to permeate Ireland?—I think they do. I think the Iceland ponies would spoil the ponies of Ireland

7995. Then the cross between the Hackney horse and the congested districts mare possibly might be something larger than a pony—supposing it is prejudicial to the hunter breed, you don't think that that produce is likely to permeate the eastern provinces?—It may as a hack, of course.

7996. You said that the farmer who bred hunters would recognise in the mare that was got by one of these Hackney stallions something that would induce him to believe that she would not breed a good hunter; is it within your experience that you can tell from the outward appearance of a mare what she is likely to produce?—Two reasons I said. The first is the size; there would be no difficulty about seeing that, and the other is the action; and I think he should be able to judge of that too.

7997. Don't you think that a mare 15 hands high is big enough to breed anything?—I would like to breed from a larger one.

7998. But it is within possibility that a mare 15

hands high would breed a horse 16 hands high?—Quite.

7999. Do you think that the ordinary farmer would be a sufficiently good judge to condemn a mare 15 hands high with good action?—No; I don't think he would.

8000. Then it is quite possible that many of those animals that were bred by a Hackney horse out at Connemara from congested district mares might find their way into a hunter breeding district?—They might, of course.

8001. And be bred from?—Yes; but I think the produce would be sold as a harness horse, not as a hunter.

8002. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think that the man who understands breeding hunters would select a mare of that class, 15 hands high, as a brood mare?—Not unless she was a very good one. Lots of small mares breed well.

8003 Do not all the hunter breeders in Meath aim at producing a weight carrying hunter?—Of course they aim at it.

8004–5. Therefore they would not be likely to select a small animal as a brood mare?—I don't think they would buy a small mare for breeding.

8006. They do not generally breed from small mares in Meath now?—Not very many of them.

8007. You think the conditions of the country are calculated to improve every kind of horse?—Yes; it seems to suit them very well.

8008. And that we can grow better horses in Ireland than in England?—I think we do.

8009. What has been the chief reason, up to the present, that we have acquired a name for hunters—has not more trouble been taken to encourage hunters than any other breed in Ireland?—Well, I suppose that is only within the last twenty years.

8010. Have not all the shows—now, for instance, take the different shows throughout the country—as a rule are not all the shows composed of hunter classes?—The vast bulk of the show is.

8011. There have been very few harness classes in any of the shows up to the present?—I think so.

8012. And if equal trouble were taken to improve the harness horse do you think Ireland could also grow harness horses?—I see no reason why it should not; I think the awards have as much to do with filling classes at shows as anything.

8013. And they are easily sold?—Very easily sold.

8014. But that up to the present there has been no special encouragement for breeding harness horses?—Not much.

8015. It has been suggested to us that foreign horses should be branded coming into Ireland, would you approve of that—following your Iceland ponies there are also American horses coming into Ireland—would you approve of branding American horses?—I have seen some American horses and they were all very bad; they were so bad and so ill-formed that I do not understand why anyone wanted a brand to distinguish them.

8016. You think they would be known?—I think they would be known.

8017. We have also had it stated that some American horses were shown as Irish hunters and were not detected?—I think it is quite possible; they might be better American horses than I have seen.

8018. Would you be in favour of branding American horses?—I don't see what harm it would be. I would be very glad if it would deter horses coming into the country and spoiling the price of what we breed.

8019. You said in answer to Mr. La Touche that you had asked the people in Connemara how they were getting on with their horse-breeding?—I have asked them in different places.

8020. What opinion do they give generally?—Some of them spoke very highly of them, and said they had improved the ponies very much indeed; others told me that it was Government horses they had bred from once or twice, but that they had gone back to the others.

8021. What were the others?—Nondescripts.

8022. Larger or smaller?—I think they were ponies very much, and when I pressed them as to why they did, and was it that the others were better horses, it didn't appear to be so; but that they went to some fellow who had a horse, and that they didn't like to leave him—that they preferred giving their money to their neighbour than to the Government as far as I could make out.

8023. That was the general idea?—That was what I gathered.

8024. CHAIRMAN.—I am not sure you have not said something you didn't quite mean. You said, in answer to a question of Mr. Wrench, that Ireland could produce better horses than were produced anywhere, of all kinds.

Mr. WRENCH.—He did not say exactly that.

Witness.—I am very much obliged to you if it wants correction. I didn't hear some of the questions very clearly, and I may not have answered them.

(Shorthand writer reads Q. 8007-8008).

8025. CHAIRMAN.—You say that you think we breed better horses in Ireland than in England; that would include the draught horses and everything else?—I think we grow them better. I think there is no difference between the blood of a good Irish hunter or steeplechaser. It is all the same as the English blood.

8026. I want to know whether you think that we produce better carriage horses, better dray horses, better cart horses, and all kinds of horses better in Ireland than in England?—No; I would not say it about the heavy dray horses, but I think we can produce them just as good.

8027. I wanted to make sure you did not say anything you did not mean?—I don't think we breed better draught horses than they do in England. We do it on a very small scale.

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Mr. J. O'Connell Murphy.

Mr. J. O'Connell Murphy examined.

8028. Chairman.—You are also a resident in the county Meath?—Yes.

8029. Do you live at all in the same neighbourhood as Mr. Bomford?—Yes; about five miles from him, between Trim and Summerhill.

8030. Have you heard his evidence?—I have.

8031. Do you agree pretty generally with that?—With some parts of it; not with all.

8032. Do you breed horses yourself?—Yes; I breed a good many horses. I have at present 18 brood mares. I have been breeding horses for 25 years on my wn account, and all my life I have been looking after them for my father before that.

8033. Do you keep a stallion?—I never kept a stallion.

8034. Do you breed hunters or carriage horses, or what sort?—Hunters; steeplechase horses.

8035. Mr. Carew.—From thoroughbreds?—Yes.

8036. Chairman. — Altogether thoroughbreds?—Oh, no; I bred some half-breds.

8037. What class of sire do you use?—The best thoroughbred I can get.

8038. And out of what kind of mares do you breed?—I have generally mares with four or five crosses of thoroughbred. I have only two mares that have only one cross that I know of.

8039. Do you find that the thoroughbred horse and the mare with three or four crosses of thoroughbred blood produces a good hunter?—I think that is the best animal any man breeding can produce. It is the high type of hunter; the steeplechase horse; the Leicestershire hunter.

8040. You think that class of horse pays the best to produce?—I think far the best; that and the thoroughbred.

8041. You consider the stallions in your neighbourhood of the quality and the kind that suits the neighbourhood?—Some of them are very good.

8042. Are you sufficiently well supplied with suitable stallions?—Yes; I think we are.

8043. Do the small farmers breed much?—They breed a good many; but I think every inducement ought to be held out to the farmers to hold and breed from their good young sound mares. I would give as substantial prizes as I could at local shows. I would increase these if possible, and give the farmers good substantial prizes for their fillies from two to seven years old. I approve of breeding from two-year olds; I have bred from them myself, with the very best results, but, at the same time, I would give the farmers prizes for mares up to any age. But I would have special prizes for foals at foot, from three to seven years old. There ought to be good sound stallions, with good feet and legs—good cannon bones—equally balanced, with no one bad point, and with a good colour, and they ought to have these horses in districts to be travelled over by the horses which ought not to commence to serve till the 1st of May; and I think the exercise the horse would get by this travelling would be very beneficial to him. Let him mate to 40 to 45 mares, and give him to the farmers at as low a fee as could be—£1 at the most. Farmers wont send a distance, even though they get a horse at a low fee. Colour is most important for the country farmers, because, no matter how good the colt, he can't sell if he is a bad colour. I think that people, when comparing thoroughbred stallions with others, should take into account the quality, looks, and the bone. It is a well known fact that if we take the cannon bone of a thoroughbred horse's leg and weigh it with the bone of a Clydesdale, the thoroughbred bone will outweigh it, and it is a well known fact that if we bury the bone of a thoroughbred horse and the bone of one of these other horses and take them up in ten years, the bone of the Clydesdale, or of one of these other horses, will be porous like a sponge, and the thoroughbred bone will be solid as when it was buried. As Colonel Fitzwygram described it, one will be ivory and the other bone. I have no prejudice against the Hackney, but I think it is very wrong to lay out Government money on a breed of horses that we don't know are going to improve the breed of Irish horses, and I am quite certain that the blood from the congested districts will permeate through the whole country, as the blood of the Connemara pony and the Kerry ponies permeated through it in the past, and I say permeated through it with great advantage. If we could get back something on the type of these ponies into these districts it is the very best thing could be done. I have known some of the best animals I ever saw in my life by Connemara ponies. I have seen some of the best animals I ever saw the produce of Connemara ponies, and their produce were the very best animals. I lived for eight years at Hortlands, in the county Kildare, and I saw a Connemara pony with a foal by her side grazing on the road. I liked it, and bought it, and learned the foal was by Fairyland. I sold him to Captain Steeds for 90 guineas; he sold him to Colonel McCalmont I don't know for what sum, and he was sold at Tattersall's for 230 guineas. I sold another out of the same mare to James Meagher, of Williamstown, and he sold it to Leonard Morrogh, and it was one of the best animals that ever ran with the hounds. In 1895, I exhibited two-year old colts in the Dublin Show, and out of 78 they won fourth and fifth prizes, and the great dam in each of these cases was a Connemara pony.

8044. Then you have a high opinion of the Connemara ponies?—Wonderful; I never saw as good animals as they were, especially the Connemara ponies that were cream coloured, with black manes and tails: they were the best of them that I have seen.

8045. Do you know Connemara yourself?—I don't; but I have seen these coming up for years in droves. They are not improving, they are disimproving.

8046. Have you seen these lately?—Yes.

8047. Can you detect anything of a difference?—I don't think they are the same stamp at all.

8048. In what way? How are they deteriorating?—They are narrower and taller, and I don't think they are nearly as well shaped, nor have they as good shoulders.

8049. You have had no experience of Hackneys yourself?—Nothing, except what I saw in the Dublin Show and what I heard and read of, and, from their action and shoulders, I would say they are not at all suitable to improve the breed of hunters. I think all Irishmen ought to try and forward on the breed of hunters, because it is the breed of Ireland. We ought to put our shoulders to the wheel and forward that as much as possible.

8050. You think we have obtained a certain reputation?—Yes; for breeding hunters.

8051. And you think that comes from some natural cause?—I am sure it did in the past come from some natural cause. I don't think the general run of farmers' mares are at all as good as they were.

8052. Can you suggest any way of improving matters?—The only way I see is by giving the prizes at the Shows, and the farmers keeping their best mares. I would keep on the cross of the thoroughbred horses with them.

8053. That is to say, a thoroughbred horse such as you describe?—Yes, a good thoroughbred horse with good shoulders.

8054. A horse to serve at a low fee?—Yes.

8055. I gather from you that you look with some apprehension to the Hackney blood—you don't know what effect it may produce?—I don't know myself but from what I have seen and heard and read I think it would very much deteriorate our hunters. I think the Hackney action would not do at all for hunting; it is quite extravagant, and a waste of energy.

8056. You think the Hackney blood may gradually filter through the whole country?—I haven't the smallest doubt of it but that it will filter as the Connemara blood filtered before, and as I say that blood filtered through the country with advantage.

8057. Have you any experience of Clydesdale blood?—None, I may say; I never bred one. I had a few of them.

8058. Then may I take it, I gather from you that what you think should be done to improve the breed generally is to endeavour to induce the farmers to keep their best mares at home to breed from, and that they should obtain the service at a fee they can afford of a really sound thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

8059. Would you have any objection to a sound and selected half-bred horse?—I would yield to no man in my appreciation of the thoroughbred, but I think a horse with three or four crosses on his dam's side by a thoroughbred horse would be a very good sire—in some cases as good as the others and perhaps more useful. Some of these horses should be in the Stud Book, "Mayboy" and "Fairyland" should be in it too, for they were nearly all thoroughbred. I say a horse with three or four crosses on the dam's side with a good family—I would be most particular about the family—and bred from a thoroughbred would make a first class sire. I think that every man ought to aim at breeding a high class hunter, and failing that a good harness horse.

8060. Do you think it is possible for the small farmers to breed that class of horse?—I think it is. I think a man with twenty acres and one mare or perhaps two could. I think there should be a prize given at the end of April or May for the best done yearling by the farmers, for I am a firm believer that the best part of a horse is what goes into his mouth.

8061. How do the small farmers generally treat their foals?—Very badly.

8062. They don't feed them?—No.

8063. Have you any opinion about registration? Do you think all stallions should be registered or licensed?—I think they ought to be all registered.

8064. You think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has been of use in your part of the country?—Yes, I think it has. I think the colts at the fairs in the country, as far as I can see, are not at all as good as they used to be, but I think the shows took a great deal of them away. I think the places where fairs are held in some places are most disgraceful; it is almost as much as a man's life is worth to go into some of them. They are not suitable at all.

8065. I suppose you don't know enough about these Connemara ponies to give us any opinion as to how the breed could be restored to what it formerly was?—I think a Welsh pony stallion would be a good thing through the country.

8066. What?—A Welsh pony stallion. I don't know can they be got now I think if you had something like the Galloway it would be the very best thing.

8067. Do you know something about these Iceland ponies?—I do, a little.

8068. What do you think of them?—I think they are the most wretched animals you could imagine of the equine race. But I could not understand Mr. Bomford's evidence that they could permeate the country and that the Hackney blood could not permeate the country.

8069. Lord ASHTOWN.—Talking about breeding hunters, do you think it is possible to breed the high class hunter in every district of Ireland?—I think it is not possible, but I think you could do as much good for the farmers in these districts by introducing a breed the blood of which, when it permeated through the country, would not deteriorate the hunting blood, but would add to it.

8070. That is not the question I am touching on: I am speaking of breeding hunters. You cannot breed hunters in a great many parts of Ireland?—I think you could breed a hunter of a certain class, decidedly. The Connemara pony was a good hunter, I saw men on them cutting down the field.

8071. Do you believe that as a rule in the poorer districts it pays the farmer to try and breed a hunter, counting misfits and everything?—I think if he does not succeed in breeding a hunter or trying to breed something that will afterwards produce a hunter he had better not try at all.

8072. You think they ought to try and produce riding horses?—Of course now more than ever, when you have the motor car and the bicycle competing with the other classes of horses. Now is the time to try and breed hunters.

8073. In the good districts, I agree with you?—Yes, and bad districts. Tell me any animals that can be bred in Connemara and the congested districts that will do better than the animals they have.

8074. What about medium districts like the North of Ireland?—In medium districts I say you can breed a very good hunter.

8075. You ought to take into calculation the misfits?—I say a misfit hunter would be very much better than a misfit Hackney to my mind. Put the two to a plough and how do you suppose they will manage: the hunter will pull the head off the Hackney. I don't believe any horse with the action of the Hackney even if he got it by chance could stay: it is too extravagant.

8076. Mr. CAREW.—Of course what we want to aim at is to get a horse that will plough and do some of the farming work, and what you mean is that the Connemara ponies will be deteriorated by the introduction of Hackney blood?—In my opinion they would.

8077. The droves coming up now are very inferior?—Yes.

8078. And the best thing could be done would be to go back to that breed which is more useful to the Connemara district and to the rest of Ireland?—Yes.

8079. You spoke of breeding from half-bred mares with sufficient dashes of thoroughbred blood to get the best weight carrying hunter?—Yes.

8080. What other blood would you have in the mare?—The old Irish type.

8081. Mr. LATOUCHE.—You think the stallions are up to the requirements of the country?—I think they are; but I don't think the farmers can get them at a low fee enough.

8082. Would you approve of the idea of the establishment of Government studs for the purpose of disseminating mares amongst the farmers or for putting valuable mares at the service of the farmers at low fees?—Yes; if I knew the breed they were going to establish.

8083. I am taking it for granted that you would advocate thoroughbred sires?—Yes; I would.

8084. Your personal experience of Connemara ponies was that they proved to be a good brood mare when crossed with a thoroughbred horse?—Yes; decidedly.

8085. You attribute that, I am told, to there being no admixture of any English blood in the pony?—I believe there were Arabs at some time or Spanish horses let out in Connemara. I often heard that these cream coloured ponies from Connemara were the descendants of two Spanish stallions—Spanish barbs.

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8086. You would hesitate now to breed from a Connemara pony?—I would not hesitate a bit with one of the old sort.

8087. But with the new sort. Would you breed from a three-year old pony that came from Connemara now, if you were told it was got by a Government stallion?—Not after their being in the district, fearing it might be got from a Government stallion.

8088. Do you think this will depreciate the value of animals coming from the congested districts to the eastern districts?—I think it will make them unsaleable in our country.

8089. Do you find the farmers are buying them now as freely as they used to?—I don't think they are buying them at all.

8090. You would hesitate to buy one of them for breeding purposes?—Decidedly.

8091. Mr. WRENCH.—You have got eighteen brood mares?—I have, at present.

8092. How many of those are thoroughbred?—About eight, I think.

8093. All except two have four or five crosses of thoroughbred blood?—Yes, and those two are by "Fairyland," out of a very good mare—I think she had a lot of Connemara blood in her.

8094. Is that the only experience you have had yourself of breeding from Connemara blood?—Yes, that is all. I told you about those two horses I bought that I had in the Dublin Show last year. I bought them as colts. I buy seven or eight colts every year, if I see a good colt I buy him if I can at all.

8095. Were they bred directly from a Connemara pony?—No; the Connemara pony was their grand-dam in one case, I think, the great grand-dam in the other.

8096. You have never been in Connemara?—Never exactly, though near it often.

8097. Never in the congested districts?—No.

8098. You can't say the mares have deteriorated very much in recent years?—No; but I say that the produce coming up here has deteriorated very much.

8099. Do you like a Clydesdale cross?—I don't like him at all.

8100. Do you know they have been using stallions, half Clydesdales, down there before the Congested Districts Board went down? May not that have affected the produce?—Indeed it may.

8101. You have not bought any Connemara ponies lately?—I have not.

8102. I think you said every man ought to aim at breeding a high class hunter?—Yes, I don't mean the small farmers exactly, but I think every man ought to aim at breeding a hunter of some sort, and I think every man who has a fair amount of land and can afford it will find that the horse that will pay him best is the Leicestershire hunter or a steeplechase horse; and if you don't succeed in that you will breed the next best thing to it.

8103. Do you know the North well?—I don't.

8104. Have you come across any North of Ireland people?—I think I have.

8105. Are they fairly intelligent?—I think the North of Ireland people are intelligent.

8106. If they thought it paid them better to breed another class of horse you would not disagree with them?—I might offer my opinion, but if I was beaten in the argument I would certainly yield; I would not at once change my opinion.

8107. You would not like to tell them now what to breed?—Yes, I would.

8108. And you say all North of Ireland men ought to breed a hunter?—I say they ought to try and breed hunters, and if you miss him he will do for a harness horse or a plough horse, or anything else.

8108A. Do you consider high action a good point in a hunter?—No.

8109. Do you consider that action often sells a harness horse?—I think it does; but I think there may be good action and extravagant action. I think there is a lot lost while the horse is carrying his foot through the air in that way.

8110. But in order to get good action that will sell him would you not be obliged to have rather extravagant action on one side?—I would not say so.

8111. You have not tried breeding harness horses?—I never want to breed a horse that I don't breed for a hunter.

8112. You have never sold your hunter misfits as harness horses?—I never had a hunter misfit yet.

8113. Then you never sold a harness horse?—I never sold a horse that I had driven myself in harness.

8114. What sort do you consider most suitable for Connemara?—I say if you could get something of the style of the Galloway cob or pony, he was a most endurable animal, fifteen hands high.

8115. Would you be surprised to hear that they had this class of stallion standing there for the past three years?—I would not be surprised.

8116. Then why are you so adverse to buying Connemara ponies?—Fearing there may be Hackney blood in them; it would deter me from doing anything with them.

8117. You would give substantial prizes for encouraging breeders to keep their good fillies?—Yes.

8118. What would you call a substantial prize?—I would say £10 and £5. I would give more if I could.

8119. Do you think that would be sufficient to make men keep their good fillies?—If you could give more I would approve of it. I don't know exactly what you would be prepared to give. I would give them the most I could—that would be my idea.

8120. Then I think you said you would encourage stallions without a single bad point?—I said with no very bad point. I would not have a stallion with one very bad point.

8121. With one specially bad point?—Yes.

8122. Is it hard to find good thoroughbred stallions at present?—I don't think it is.

8123. Where would you go to buy them?—There are several stallions in England, if there was a demand for them. I had two horses operated on myself this year, and there were not two finer hunter stallions in the world; but there was no use for them. One of them was by "Hackler," out of a daughter of "Mavourneen," by "Playactor"; and the other by Mr. Maher's horse, "Torpedo."

8124. Mr. CAREW.—"Ireland" is a very good stallion that you bred yourself?—I think "Ireland" is one of the best sires in Ireland for hunters.

8125. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you consider the Clydesdale blood has filtered through the country?—I think Mr. Bomford was the only man who was filtering it through. I don't think it has. I know very little about cart stallions.

8126. Do many exist through the country?—Not about our country. There was an old type of sire in Meath—an old Irish sort of horse—and I saw some of these plain-looking horses get good hunters, and not from thoroughbred mares. There was a horse called "Tom Turf"——

8127. More in the type of a cart stallion, but clean legged?—Yes.

8128. You think that all those small farmers in the West ought to aim at breeding hunters of some kind?—Yes.

8129. So that you would turn the whole country into the hunter trade?—I would.

8130. Do you know, as a matter of fact, that the trade in hunters is only a small part of the trade in horses generally?—Yes; but I say in trying to breed the hunter you will breed a good type of harness horse—the best sort of harness horse I know.

8131. Even if he is a small horse of about 15 or 15.1 hands?—I think he would be a very suitable horse.

8132. In spite of bicycles?—That is my argument. I say I would breed nothing but the hunter on account of the bicycles and the motor cars.

8133. Would you advise these small men with these small mares, who could not produce an animal of about 15 hands, to breed hunters?—Yes.

8134. Do you find it easy to sell 15 hands hunters?—Very easy.

8135. Would you buy any at present of that size?—If I thought he was a wonderful animal I would buy him, but I buy and breed the very best I can. I have not seen the animal, but I bought one bred in the congested districts this very week, but it is by "Watchspring."

8136. Do you often buy without seeing?—I have bought a great many horses without seeing them, because I depend on the pedigree.

8137. The CHAIRMAN.—As to these Connemara ponies, Mr. Murphy, you told us you did not know the district yourself, and that all you judge by is that in your opinion they have deteriorated?—Yes; the stock I saw coming up I judge by.

8138. You told us what you think would be the best way of improving them. I gather from you that on the whole, from what you have heard and seen, you don't think that the Hackney blood is likely to be of general benefit throughout the country, and I think I understood you to say at the beginning that what you objected to principally, as regards the Hackneys, was that the Government should supply these Hackneys?—Yes; that there should be money spent on a breed that we didn't know was going to improve the breed.

8139. The results being uncertain in your opinion, it is not in your opinion a wise thing for the Government to expend public money in that particular way?—Yes.

8140. I gather from you also—correct me if I am wrong—that you think, taking it all round, that the most advantageous thing for Ireland, generally, is to turn its attention, as much as possible, to breeding hunters?—Yes; I think the Irish hunter now is a specialty, and I think in most cases it is one of the only things I see to help the farmer in his ever increasing difficulties, which I think are bound to increase as far as I can see.

8141. You think the best way of improving the breed would be to supply—I suppose you mean that the Government should supply—suitable sound thoroughbred stallions at a low fee to walk the country?—Yes.

8142. And that all stallions should be registered, which of course necessitates an examination for their soundness; and that substantial prizes should be offered to induce farmers to keep and breed their best mares?—Yes.

8143. Is there anything you would like to say to the Commission?—I think that what I said about a prize in the end of April or May, for the best done foals, is very important. I think the farmers ought to be encouraged to do their foals well.

8144. Mr. WRENCH.—You think the best way to meet the agricultural depression in Ireland is to turn the farmers into hunter breeders?—I don't say that. I said it is one of the best ways.

8145. Mr. CAREW.—What you mean is the most paying thing is to produce the hunter, and if they fail in the production of the hunter, they will have the next best thing?—Yes; I am a very large farmer myself, and I don't believe I would be in Ireland at all now but for breeding hunters.

8146. You bred a great many hunters yourself?—Yes; and succeed as well as most men.

8147. And got very good prices?—I got £1,000 for a half-bred horse.

8148. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know a man who breeds as many good hunters as yourself?—Steeplechase horses, I do not.

8149. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You admit the necessity for harness horses?—I do, of course.

8150. And you acknowledge that there is an enormous sale of harness horses out of Ireland?—Yes.

8151. And the best way to breed these harness horses is to breed for hunters?—Yes; and some of these horses I sold as steeplechase horses would make excellent hunters.

8152. The CHAIRMAN.—Are many horses sold as remounts about you?—Very few.

8153. Mr. WRENCH.—They are all too good?—I don't think so. I don't know whether Mr. Wrench is chaffing me or not, but if he comes down, I will show him the horses I am breeding, the way they are bred, the way they are fed, and if he disagrees with me, I will consider his views with pleasure.

8154. CHAIRMAN.—Any other remarks you would like to make?—Nothing, except if it came within the line of this Commission, I think the present way of handicapping horses and short distance races, are very much against the thoroughbred horse; and I think that this should be looked to, because there is where we have to go for our stallions. I think there should be a few good long welter weight-for-age races established through the country. I think it would be a great means of keeping up either mares or stallions, something on the lines of the Paris Steeplechase.

Mr. JOHN PURDON, Athboy, examined.

8155. The CHAIRMAN.—You are also a resident of county Meath?—Yes.

8156. And you have had a long experience of horse-breeding?—Yes.

8157. Have you heard the evidence of the gentleman who preceded you?—I have; and I thoroughly agree with every word Mr. Murphy has said. They are exactly my own ideas.

8158. You agree with Mr. Murphy as to the desirability of breeders turning their attention as much as possible to breeding hunters?—Yes, wholly and solely.

8159. Do you think there is any natural reason why Ireland has become famous for hunters, or is it mere chance?—I think the climate has a good deal to say to it, and the fine big fields the horses are allowed to roam over. In England they are kept in small paddocks and little yards; they don't see the natural country like ours do.

8160. Do you agree with him as to breeding from two-year-olds?—I think it is a very good thing if the mare is a good stout one, not a weedy poor two-year-old.

8161. In your opinion is the price for hunters and high-class carriage horses keeping up?—I think hunters are, but I don't think the harness colts are

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selling near as dear as two-year-olds. Colts that are taken down to the North of Ireland are £20 less than four years ago.

8162. Have you any experience of breeding from Connemara ponies?—Yes; they are useful good animals, no better. I am talking of ten years ago.

8163. Have you seen any lately?—I did. I saw twenty or thirty of them yesterday in Athboy fair.

8164. What do you think of them?—A poor looking lot, I thought.

8165. Do you know how they were bred?—I don't—I didn't ask what they were got by.

8166. Mr. La Touche.—You have been in Galway yourself?—Yes.

8167. And did you notice that the mares there have very much deteriorated in late years?—I saw some beautiful mares in part of Connemara, but I think they belong to one man who kept a special breed for generations. It was past Maamcross roads.

8168. Mr. Wrench.—Was it a man named William Lyons, near Oughterard—three miles past it?—Oh; past Maamcross; they were beautiful mares; I never saw lovelier mares; about twenty were in the drove, and foals with them. They were the perfect type of a small thoroughbred mare.

8169. Mr. La Touche.—Have you any personal experience of Hackneys yourself?—Very little; I have seen them in their own country, in England.

8170. Do you think the introduction of any strain of blood into Connemara and the western districts is likely to affect hunter-producing districts?—It keeps cropping up through the country here and there. Fifty or sixty of these ponies are sold into Meath every year.

8171. And some of them are bred from?—Most of them are bred from, I think.

8172. Do you agree with Mr. Murphy that the best way to breed harness horses is to try to breed hunters?—I think so; that is, they will go a long distance on a journey for you, and won't shut up.

8173. Do you agree as to the registration of stallions?—A very useful thing.

8174. Would you advocate the establishment of Government studs for the purpose of sending mares to farmers, and of putting valuable thoroughbred sires in reach of poor farmers at nominal fees?—That will do away with private enterpriso altogether, and then if the Government got into any little difficulty to-morrow or next day, and the shop is shut up, the farmers will have nothing to fall back upon. I, and people like me, who keep stallions, if this is to be established, will want to be bought out and get compensation for our losses. It cuts both ways. I could not compete against the Government.

8175. You disapprove of Government studs?—I say it does away with private enterprise.

8176. Do you think the action of the Congested Districts Board has done away with private enterprise in the West?—No; I think there is very little private enterprise in the West.

8177. Were there not horses bred there before the Government stallions went down?—Many, indeed.

8178. Then how were they bred?—With their own country stallions, and they get from time to time strange blood sent into it.

8179. Didn't they belong to private individuals?—Some of the landlords down there may have had useful horses. The very man I talked about just now must have produced very useful stallions and mares.

8180. But is not private enterprise, even by a landlord, worthy of protection?—I don't know about the private enterprise of a landlord only to pay my rent.

8181. It appears to me you object to interference with private enterprise in Meath, but you don't see any reason to object to it in Galway?—The people there are poor. I have seen the greatest improvement in their cattle since bulls were sent them. I think that did them more good than horse breeding. The cattle are worth £2 a piece more than they were before.

8182. Have the young horses improved likewise?—In that country?

8183. Yes?—I don't think they are as good as they were. The Connemara pony is not the same pony that I remember.

8184. While the cattle have improved in value?—Very much.

8185. You don't think the horses have done the same?—I don't think so.

8186. Have you acted as a judge in any Shows in these districts in the poorer parts of Ireland?—Yes; down at Hollymount.

8187. You didn't see any of these ponies there?—They have a class for ponies there always.

8188. Do you think that any part of Ireland that you are acquainted with, that is capable of breeding a horse at all, is capable of breeding a hunter?—Well, I don't think that in Connemara you would breed a hunter, but you would breed a thing that might produce a hunter.

8189. Do you think it would be to the advantage of the Connemara horse breeder to endeavour to increase the size of his animal?—I don't know very much about ponies, but I think any pony over 14 hands is not as valuable as one that is 14.

8190. For polo, I suppose?—That is the only thing you would get a good price for them for

8191. Would you approve of stallions being sent down of a larger size with the idea of improving the size and stature of these ponies?—I think they are more useful their own size, and easier sold.

8192. Mr. Wrench.—What stallion would you think the best to send into Connemara?—You are asking me a thing I don't very well know, because I have not studied pony breeding. I suppose the old type of short-legged useful thing, with good neck and shoulders—a miniature thoroughbred horse.

8193. Do you think as a rule that hunter misfits make paying prices as harness horses?—I think they do, and that they are very useful.

8194. I am not talking about their use, but whether they pay well?—No misfit pays.

8195. What do harness horse buyers generally look for in a harness horse?—Colour and action, and a certain size.

8196. These are the most important qualifications?—Yes.

8197. Did you ever see any of the country stallions in Connemara?—I did, a great many.

8198. Recently?—Last summer.

8199. Where?—Three or four of them I saw at Oughterard, at a fair, that were brought in to be shown there.

8200. Did you act as a judge of the jumping at Hollymount?—I really forget; I know it was very good there; it was two years ago I think.

8201. Not last year?—I wasn't there last year. I could not go.

8202. The Chairman.—I didn't ask you a great many questions because you agreed generally with Mr. Murphy, and there was no occasion to go over the same ground twice; but if you have got any suggestions to make, or anything to say to the Commission, I should like to hear it?—I think the suggestion of Mr. Murphy, of giving prizes for the best done yearling and also for young mares, could not be bettered; I often said the same.

8203. Mr. Carew.—And for the establishment of long welter races?—I would not like to compete with Mr. Murphy in his long-distance races.

8204. The Chairman.—Do you keep a thoroughbred horse yourself?—Yes.

8205. Mr. Carew.—You are the owner of "Ascetic"?—Yes.

8206. Mr. WRENCH.—How many stallions have you?—I have four now.

8207. Mr. CAREW.—Did you ever drive a Hackney?—I did. They are very pleasant for a short distance, but are not able to stand a long one.

8208 What is the difficulty do you think?—They are gaudy goers, and, of course, wear themselves out more than one that slips along.

8209. Mr. WRENCH.—You think a horse that slips along pays the best?—I think so.

Sells the best?—Yes.

Mr. CHARLES WEBB, Castlegarren, Sligo, examined.

Mr. Charles Webb.

8210. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county of Sligo?—Yes.

8211. You act as land agent?—Yes; I am land agent to Sir Henry Gore-Booth.

8212. Do you know the county pretty well generally?—Yes; the north part better than the south, but I know the south too.

8213. Are there many horses bred in the part you know best?—No, not many; it is not a very horse breeding country; it has not many advantages; there are very few sires, and I don't think there is a good one in it.

8214. Is the southern portion of the county better?—Yes. The late Mr. Alexander had some good sires, and there was another sire, more towards Tubbercurry—"Rattlecash" he was called—that got a wonderful lot of good horses.

8215. What kind of mares do the farmers keep about you?—Small weedy mares; the wonder is how they could pay them to breed from.

8216. And what kind of stallions is there?—About us there is one thoroughbred horse, and there was a Hackney—a Congested Districts Board horse there last year; that is the only one about Sligo. There are two or three others, said to be thoroughbreds; one is, but they are unsound; this part of the county is very badly off for sires.

8217. What class of sire do you think is most suitable?—Thoroughbred.

8218. Have you seen any of the produce by the Hackney?—I did not hear of him getting any—I don't think he was liked; I heard the farmers say they didn't like him; and Major Eccles that had him told me he didn't like him either; he was not appreciated, I think.

8219. You think that with a suitable thoroughbred sire, assuming that he stood cheap enough, that the farmers about you should breed a saleable pony?—I think they could, more saleable than at present. I think it would be a good thing if the Government would grant money to landlords to enable them to buy a good sire to give to their tenants at a nominal price; that would be going against Mr. Purdon's private enterprise; but I think that landlords should encourage their tenants by having the best sires of everything, cattle and sheep. Since I went down there Sir Henry has allowed me to provide bulls and rams every year for the tenants, and I think if the same thing was done about getting good sires, it would have a good effect.

8220. Are there any half-bred stallions in the country?—There is one that I know of at Sligo.

8221. What kind of a horse is he?—He dishes a great deal: he is a fine looking horse got by "Waif," dam by "Lord Gough." I have a few foals of his, and one is specially good, the other not quite so good looking; they are both out of good mares.

8222. Is he very popular?—I don't know: his action is against him; he dishes a great deal, but a fine dashing goer; he has great courage, and it is a pity his action is not better: he should get a good carriage horse.

8223. Do you know what fee he stands at?—£2.

8224. Do you know what are the fees of the thoroughbreds of the district?—£2 to £3. A great many whatever they can get, the cheaper the better; and that is the reason I say the landlords should try to get good sires; if they got money from the Government they could afford to do it without making money out of it. Under the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme the stallion keepers go in for keeping stallions as it pays them well, which is their object.

8225. What do you think the small farmer could afford to pay?—The less the better—half a sovereign or so.

8226. Is the money the great object—supposing he can get a sound horse for a sovereign, would he go to the unsound one for half a sovereign in preference?—Yes. I think you should leave the discretion with the landlord or whoever had the horse, to refuse to give the service to a mare unfit for breeding; the farmer would then see the advantage of having a good mare.

8227. At what age do they sell their horses in your district?—As young ones.

8228. Where do they go to?—There is a fair at Ballyshannon where they sell a good many, and a fair at Ballymote, and at Carrignagat, in February, and some go to Enniskillen.

8229. What becomes of them?—They are drafted away; they sell them young; there is not many of them can afford to keep them; some keep them until they are two or three years old, and get a little work out of them.

8230. Have you any idea how the mares can be improved?—By giving some substantial prizes, and by affording some inducement to the farmers to keep them, by giving cheap service, or at a small rate for a good mare.

8231. Is the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme in operation in your district?—It is, but it is almost a dead letter; there is only one horse there belonging to the Royal Dublin Society, and I don't think he is cared for. I think there is only one good horse in that neighbourhood, and that is at Manorhamilton, a horse called "Red Anchor"; I have been breeding from him recently; he is not very high—15.2, with action fitted for anything, active and a fellow that raced well; he is splendidly bred by "Mask," dam "Chelsea China," by "Stirling."

8232. During your experience of the country, do you think the breed of horses has improved or not?—Oh, I think it has deteriorated.

8233. Do you attribute that to any known cause?—To the drafting away of the mares.

8234. Lord ASHTOWN.—You think it would not pay a landlord without Government assistance to keep a sire?—I don't think he should look for profit.

8235. Could he keep it without losing money?—I don't think landlords should be asked to do every-

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thing; they are asked to do a great deal at present; to get a good sire means laying out a very large sum of money.

8236. You think if a landlord has got a good sire he should be helped?—Yes.

8237. This horse "Red Anchor," how far is he from you?—Seventeen miles.

8238. Is he one of the registered horses?—No, and I don't know why he is not. He ought to be; the owner, I believe, is applying to have him registered now; I don't think he understood about it until I told him.

8239. Mr. WRENCH.—Was not a thoroughbred standing at Major Eccles's?—Yes; I don't think he is liked.

8240. He was standing the same as the Hackney?—Yes.

8241. You don't know how many services this thoroughbred got?—I don't think either got many.

8242. They are not a very horse-breeding people then?—Not very. I think they would, though, if more inducements were held out to them. They have to go too far; they have no inducement to breed now.

8243. Mr. CAREW.—If inducements were held out would they breed?—I certainly think so.

8244. The Hackney didn't hold out these inducements?—I heard them say they didn't like him.

8245. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there any suggestion you would like to make?—I agree with what Mr. Murphy has said; I think his ideas are very good; I think he speaks like a book.

8246. You agree generally with what he said?—Yes.

Mr. R. D. LAWRENSON, Coolkenno, Wicklow, examined.

Mr. R. D. Lawrenson.

8247. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County Wicklow?—I live in West Wicklow.

8248. Have you any experience yourself in horse breeding?—I have been breeding horses myself for the last twenty years.

8249. What class of horses?—I have been aiming to breed hunters, and have been fairly successful.

8250. What do you do with horses that are not quite good enough for hunters, or are they all good enough for hunters?—I manage to turn them all into hunters.

8251. Do you consider that the most profitable horse to breed in your part of the country?—Certainly the hunter is the most profitable kind to breed.

8252. How many brood mares do you keep?—At present four thoroughbreds and three half-bred mares.

8253. Have you any stallions?—I have two.

8254. What are they?—One is a thoroughbred and the other a Clydesdale; the Clydesdale I got only last year.

8255. A pure-bred Clydesdale?—Yes, a pure-bred.

8256. You only have the Clydesdale lately?—Yes.

8257. What mares do you put to him?—I did not put any mares of my own except one cart mare.

8258. Do you propose to try any experiments with him with a thoroughbred or half-bred mare?—Certainly not.

8259. Why did you get him?—We want farm horses, and there are very few Clydesdales about. I got him more as a profitable horse. The farmers want to breed Clydesdales. He matures earlier, and they get rid of him earlier than the thoroughbred.

8260. What kind of mares are there about the country generally?—About 15·1 is the average fairly well-bred; some descended from the old Irish breed, and some of them descended from a very good horse in that locality forty years ago, called "Midge"; and more of them descended from "Irish Bird Catcher" and sons and grandsons of his.

8261. Is the quality of the mares about the district improving, or the reverse?—They certainly are not improving, inasmuch as good ones have to be sold, and these mares that have to be sold are, of course, all by thoroughbred horses. I would call those the good mares.

8262. How is your part of the country off for sires?—Not as well off as I would like to see it. I mean to say that thoroughbred horses about have not sufficient bone in them to my idea.

8263. Are there any half-bred sires?—There are some.

8264. Do you approve of them?—I much prefer the thoroughbred; at the same time the half-bred horse descended from the mare with three pure crosses and that looked like a hunter, I would say would be the next best thing to a thoroughbred horse.

8265. Are there any other stallions of any other breeds?—There are one or two Clydesdales about, and in Carlow there are some shire horses. I live on the border of Carlow.

8266. Have you any experience of the cross of the thoroughbred with the Clydesdale or Shire horse?—I have, one or two cases, but I don't like the cross.

8267. You don't like them?—No; they generally have big heads—heads not stuck on properly. You cannot catch them properly in your hand, and they are deficient in stamina.

8268. What do you prefer?—The thoroughbred horse and the horse fastly approaching the thoroughbred horse.

8269. And the half-bred mare?—Yes; I have seen some good hunters bred from Connemara ponies.

8270. Have you ever done so yourself?—No, but neighbours of mine have.

8271. That has been successful?—Yes; very successful.

8272. Are they doing so now?—There is a neighbour of mine breeding out of a mare from a Connemara pony at present.

8273. Do you know at all—can you offer any opinion as to whether the Connemara pony has deteriorated?—Yes, deteriorated a good deal.

8274. Since when?—Within the last eight or ten years.

8275. Do you know Connemara yourself—have you ever been there?—No, I have never been there.

8276. And you have no opinion as to the cause of the deterioration of the ponies?—The droves that come to the country are plainer looking; they are more off the pony, and more Clydesdale blood in them, I should say.

8277. Mr. CAREW.—Have you any experience of Hackneys?—None, except that I have seen them at Shows.

8278. So far as you have seen them at the Shows you would not care for them?—No; I don't like their action at all. I had a drive in a trap with one and I didn't like him.

8279. He belonged to a neighbour?—Yes.

8280. What didn't you like in him?—He went very well for a few miles, and then died away and warped about every way.

8281. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—There is traffic in ponies

between the Western districts and Wicklow?—Yes; they come in large droves to the fairs about—Shillelagh, Tinahely, and Carlow.

8282. Do they breed from them?—The small farmers buy them and keep them to work, and they breed a foal from them.

8283. And anything that affects the blood of the Connemara pony is calculated then to affect the breed in the county of Wicklow?—Certainly.

8284. Mr. WRENCH.—You think breeding from thoroughbred horses is the most successful way of horse breeding?—I would say it is the most successful way to breed the hunter.

8285. And you think hunters are the best horses to aim at breeding?—Yes, I do; the high class hunter.

8286. And that is what you try yourself?—Yes.

8287. These neighbours of yours, can they sell their produce from Connemara ponies as high as you can sell your produce not from Connemara ponies?—I would not go so far as that. I have known—a Connemara pony being the grand dam—the produce to go to £150, and be up to 15 stone.

8288. Have you known more than one instance of that?—Yes, two or three.

8289. Did you sell a short time ago some horses that you bred?—I did.

8290. Did you find they sold at paying prices?—No, I did not: I sold the worst I had.

8291. You sold about twenty, did you not?—I did.

8292. Did you sell a black four year old by "Anabasis," grand dam by "Old Midge"?—Yes.

8293. You got 16 guineas for that mare?—Yes, she was a pony.

8294. Did you also sell a bay gelding, three years, by "Xenophon," grand dam by "Old Midge," for 10 guineas?—That was a pony also; those two were very small—much undersized.

8295. Was a bay mare by "Sylvia," dam by "Revenge," a pony?—It was not, but "Sylvia" was an unsound horse, and the mare was unsound.

8296. That went for 14½ guineas?—Yes.

8297. A bay yelding by "Pelican," dam by "Champion, went for 15½ guineas?—Yes; I have 40 horses at the present time.

8298. At that time didn't you sell your entire stock?—No.

8299. How many did you sell?—About 20.

8300. And you didn't find those pay?—No, that is why I got rid of them.

8301. As a matter of fact in breeding you must have a great many misfits?—Of course, you cannot breed them all to order.

8302. How many brood mares had you at that time?—Four or five, I should say.

8303. Did you find the horses pay as well as cattle?—Yes; I have got some very good prices for hunters.

8304. Do you find altogether that horses pay better than cattle?—I think they do.

8305. In spite of the misfits you breed enough good ones to overcome the misfits?—I should say so; but I would like decidedly to vote against the expenditure of public money on Hackney blood being introduced into Leinster.

8306. CHAIRMAN.—You naturally admit that in breeding horses you cannot always ensure that you will be quite satisfied with the animal you produce?—No, you cannot.

8307. Any more than in cattle breeding or anything else?—No.

8308. I take it you think that horse breeding can be made to pay under certain circumstances, and as far as your opinion is concerned, you think breeding hunters is the most profitable?—I think so.

8309. You don't mean by that that it must be the most profitable everywhere?—No.

8310. Mr. CAREW.—This sale of yours was not with the object of getting rid of your entire stud?—No.

8311. Only with the object of getting rid of those that did not pay?—Quite so.

8312. The CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything else you would like to say to the Commission?—I would like to say that I think encouragement by prizes to yearlings in the spring would be very good. I don't see how very well you can encourage farmers to keep their best mares, because when we want money we must sell the best mares; and I do think that if foals are not fed from the weaning time to the following spring they never turn into anything. In reading the newspaper reports of the Commission last week, I saw that one gentleman wanted to do away with Queen's Plates. I would not at all approve of that. Those are the horses we want to encourage most; they are the ones proved to have stamina. I would rather agree with Mr. Murphy's idea of having long-distance races.

8313. You think the improvement of thoroughbred stock would be of general value throughout the country, because you would have a better class of sire to go to?—Certainly.

8314. Mr. WRENCH.—Would you register any stallions except thoroughbreds?—I would register half-bred stallions with three pure crosses on the dam side.

8315. Would you make that a *sine qua non*?—Yes.

8316. Would you register any suitable looking horse that had that breeding?—Yes, provided he was like a hunter and showed quality enough. I would also suggest that all stallions should be licensed and examined by a veterinary surgeon as to soundness.

8317. Mr. CAREW.—That is, that every owner should take out a license before keeping a stallion?—Yes, to serve for the public; but I would only register the thoroughbred horse, and horse fast approaching the thoroughbred.

8318. For the purpose of getting rid of this mongrel?—Yes, and unsound ones.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, Dundalk, examined.

8319. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the County of Louth?—Yes.

8320. Do you wish to speak on behalf of the Committe e of the Dundalk Horse Show?—I have not been specially sent here by the Committee; but speaking about coming here to some of the members, they thought if I could come and give evidence on a particular point it would be a good thing, a point that we are all agreed upon.

8321. You are a member of that Committee?—Yes. I may say I have been the one to start the Show from the beginning. I have worked it up, and taken a great interest in it.

8322. What are the particular points you wish to speak about?—Well, all the evidence we have read goes to show that the improvement should be in the direction of the mares; well, we don't think so—at least I don't. I think the improvement should begin with the stallions. At present in the county I don't think we have five thoroughbred weight-carrying hunters.

8323. In the county—you mean in your district?—I don't think I saw more than three in my lifetime that would carry 15 stone to hounds. As long as we are breeding from cast off 5 furlong horses from England what can we have but those miserable mares we see in the fairs? What I would suggest is the

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establishing of a stud farm for the purpose of breeding thoroughbred weight-carrying hunters to let out for the country.

8324. Hunting sires?—Yes; the only valuable horses we have in this country are those carrying 13 to 15 stone; but for want of suitable mares and suitable stallions we cannot produce them in sufficient numbers.

8325. You are in favour of establishing a Government establishment?—It is the only way to compass the thing; it would take a large sum not within the range of private enterprise.

8326. What would you suggest they should do with the fillies?—If you have a weight-carrying hunter sire you are bound to improve the fillies in time.

8327. What would be done with the fillies in the Government establishment?—Let them out to suitable districts, not to every district; it is a well-known fact that you cannot get bone unless you have limestone. I would choose the districts, and let them out to suitable parties; a certain number would have to be kept for the production of the very thing I am advocating.

8328. When you say let out, you mean for purchase on easy terms?—Quite so.

8329. And then supposing these sires to be bred and produced?—Then I would let them out on the same terms as under the present scheme. You have horses scattered all over the country not fit to be let to good mules—rather skinny brutes with no bone.

8330. They would have to serve at a low fee?—I think the fee is reasonable at present.

8331. I mean these Government horses?—If they could charge a lower fee so much the better, but they are not unreasonable at present.

8332. You admit, I suppose, that the existence of bad mares is detrimental?—Yes.

8333. You tell me the most practical way to improve them would be to improve the stallions?—Undoubtedly, no question about it; what I have noticed at our shows is the few mares that are shown, and their very bad quality.

8334. I suppose you have not thought out in detail anything about it?—Oh no, sir; I merely wished to state that as the concentrated opinion of some of my friends.

8335. Lord Ashtown.—Do you want these horses bred at the stud farm to be thoroughbred horses?—Surely I want to breed straight; at present all our weight-carrying hunters are mongrels; they have all a cross of the draught in them; for the purpose of getting strength you have to get the draught.

8336. These horses bred in the stud, do you want them to be what are called half-bred horses or thoroughbreds?—I want them pure bred if possible.

8337. Pure bred on hunting lines or racing lines?—I don't think horses bred for racing purposes are fit to let out for hunters at all.

8338. But you want to buy hunting mares?—You have to begin with the hunting mare; you would not get a weight-carrying thoroughbred mare.

8339. And you would form a breed of hunting sires?—Yes; and endeavour to breed straight instead of as at present by crossing.

8340. Mr. La Touche.—I understood you said these sires ought to be pure-bred, and then you said they should be thoroughbred horses out of hunting mares—that would not be pure-bred?—You will have to work up the breed. With the present horses I don't think you can get a sufficient number of weight-carrying hunters.

8341. You propose that the Government should manufacture a breed?—Yes.

8342. A breed of sires?—Yes; to get a horse that will carry 13 to 15 stone to hounds.

8343. You don't think that could be done by breeding from thoroughbreds?—Not the sort we have at present.

8344. Do you think it is beyond the bounds of possibility to breed a 13 stone to 15 stone horse with a thoroughbred sire?—If you do you must put them to a draft mare.

8345. Do any of the horses of the congested districts come to you?—None whatever. I don't know anything about it.

8346. Mr. Wrench.—To keep up this breed you would cross the horses with each other?—I think it is the only way.

8347. You would not go on crossing with the thoroughbred, but cross the animals with each other?—Yes.

8348. That is your idea of creating a hunter breed?—Quite so. I don't see how it can be done any other way

8349. Have the mares deteriorated about you?—Yes; they have become lighter in bone, and not nearly such good action.

8350. Do they breed many harness horses?—Everybody goes in for breeding a hunter if they possibly can, and, of course, anything that does not turn out a hunter is sold for harness purposes.

8351. Chairman.—Anything else you would like to say?—Nothing, my lord.

The Commission then adjourned to January 5th, 1897.

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SIXTEENTH DAY.—TUESDAY, JANUARY 5TH, 1897.

Present:—Lord Rathdonnell, in the Chair; Lord Ashtown, Hon. Henry. W. Fitzwilliam, Colonel St. Quintin, Mr. Percy La Touche, Mr. F. S. Wrench.

Mr. Hugh Neville, Secretary.

Sir Douglas Brooke, Bart.

Sir Douglas Brooke, Bart., Colebrook, County Fermanagh, examined.

8352. Chairman.—You live at Colebrook, county Fermanagh, and take considerable interest in the subject of horse breeding?—Yes; I have been on the Dublin Society's district committee since it was first started. I did secretary for it for some time, and I have taken a good deal of interest in the local shows there too, and I have been breeding for some years a good many horses myself.

8353. What class of horses do you breed?—I was trying to breed hunters. I was breeding from very good mares. They were all mares in the Hunters' Improvement Society's Record, and there were some of them mares that had taken prizes in England, and I put them to the best thoroughbred horse I could get. I put them to several of the horses sent down under the Dublin Society's first scheme, which were supposed to be the best horses, I suppose, in Ireland at the time; and I put them to all the best thoroughbred horses I could find about the place, and I had a very good thoroughbred stallion of my own, but I did not find that I succeeded in breeding horses of the class that one wanted as hunters.

8354. What class of land is there in your district: what soil?—It is a good deal limestone, but it is rather a poor soil on the whole.

8355. Are there many horses bred in your neigh-

bourhood?—Oh, yes; there are a good many bred, but I don't think quite as many as used to be. I should say one farmer out of two breeds a foal about twice in three years.

8356. What class of horse do they breed?—General utility horses; nothing else. They did breed from Clydesdales at one time, but they gave them up, they found it was such an excessively bad cross. I am sorry to say there is some of the blood left in the country still. But the other horses they breed are mostly sold as remounts for the foreign Governments. The better class and the others are largely used in the country among the farmers. When I say the better class, the still better class than that are sold for harness purposes, I think, more than anything else.

8357. Are there suitable mares and stallions in the district for getting that class?—No; there are very few good mares. I don't think there are fifteen mares in the whole county that are fit to be put to a thoroughbred stallion at all. The rest are all either these bad brutes with half Clydesdale blood in them or else they are too small and weedy altogether and when put to a thoroughbred they breed nothing but absolute weeds, and the result of that is that the people put them to what they call half-bred stallions—not what I call a half-bred stallion—I should call them a mongrel stallion, simply to get a little weight and action into the produce.

8358. Are there many of these stallions in the country?—Yes; a good many, and I don't think very many of them are sound.

8359. A bad class of stallion?—A really bad class of stallion.

8360. And the mares, you say, are——?—Small and weedy, the majority; there are a few good mares, but very few.

8361. Do the farmers in your district rear their foals or sell them young?—They rear them mostly, and a few are sold young when they are weaned.

8362. Where do they sell their horses?—In Clones and Enniskillen, young horses, and in the Moy fair anything that is better; but the ones that are sold in the Moy fair are horses that are bought in the South of Ireland and brought up and fed by the farmers.

8363. Do they do the feeding business in your district?—Yes, some of them; there are very few horses bred in my district that are fit to send to the Moy fair at any time of their life.

8364. Do you ever remember any better class of mare in your district than what there is now, are they deteriorating, do you think?—They are certainly not improved, and I am told by men who have more experience than I, farmers who are breeding horses, that in their memory they have decidedly deteriorated, of course my memory does not go far back, it only goes back nine years, they certainly have not improved within the last nine years.

8365. Have you any scheme that you think would work out well for the improvement of mares?—I am certain that the class of stallions that are there at the present time are not suitable, and I have seen the produce of Hackneys with these weedy mares and it certainly has been very successful, they are animals which have thriven well and fetched good prices. I bred two of them myself out of two indifferent mares that I had, that I only bred from because they happened to go lame, I certainly should not have bred from them with a thoroughbred, I tried the experiment with a Hackney and the produce of those two mares sold for more than the produce of hunter mares to a thoroughbred stallion, and gave me very much less trouble to feed. I had them all running in the Deer-park together, and where the thoroughbred produce was not thriving the produce of the two Hackneys were as fat as they could stand. There has been one Hackney stallion in the district, only one and he not a very good one, and I have seen the produce of this Hackney and certainly with these weedy mares it has bred a much more saleable and useful article to the small farmers than the thoroughbred did for them. But I believe the only thing really to improve the breed of horses through the country is, as was suggested here before, I believe, to register all horses, in fact, in Ireland, the same as dogs are registered, register them with a full pedigree, so that anybody can see what the pedigree is, and I think it will stop a good deal of false pedigrees that are sometimes put on indifferent animals.

8366. Have you had any opportunity of seeing any of the stock by the horses imported by the Congested Districts Board?—Oh, yes, I have seen two that are close to me that were bought as foals down there, one of them is a very fine cob about 15.2, with good action, a heavy weight-carrying cob, the other shows more quality, is lighter built and is a very good hunter, it was out hunting the other day, and is a very fine jumper indeed, I have never seen it in very long runs but what I have seen it in it has done very well. And then I have seen a lot of the produce down at the stud farm and I have seen some very good ones. There are two cobs that are down there now that would, I think, make a good enough pair of cobs for anyone to drive.

8367. What stud farm?—The Congested Districts Board's stud farm, Chantilly.

8368. You mean you have seen the half-bred Hackneys?—The half-bred Hackneys, yes, and also there are some of the produce of the Arab stallion, "Awfully Jolly," they are very nice ponies but they are absolutely out of the market, as far as I can see they are only about 13.2 to 13.3, would do for a child's pony, but there is no value in them, which the others have decidedly. I don't believe those two cobs are trained to harness yet, but they are certainly worth £120 to £130 as they stand.

8369. What age are they?—Rising four. Then I have seen two others on Mr. Wrench's own farm, one of them bred in Achill Island by a Hackney, a horse of over sixteen hands, well I don't think if East saw it he would refuse to buy it.

8370. Is there a Hackney stallion standing in Achill Island?—There was I believe.

8371. Has the Royal Dublin Society's scheme been of any benefit in your district?—I think not. I have been working it the whole time, but I don't think it has been of any real benefit.

8372. Have you any improvement to suggest with regard to that scheme?—I don't think it can be improved on without more money. The money is too little to do any good. The money devoted to each county must be so small that it can do very little.

8373. But you think with more money the scheme would work beneficially to the country?—Yes, but I should certainly make it a much opener scheme. I should register other horses than thoroughbreds. I should register them according to the desire of the people in each county. You might have it the same as the present scheme, and allow anybody who had a Hackney to have him registered, and anybody who had a thoroughbred to have him registered. You would soon see to which of the registered stallions the majority of the people were going, and would thereby be able to judge which was most required in the country. I certainly think the scheme should be open that way to allow other horses of pure breeds to be registered.

8374. Have you any further observations you would like to make to the Commission?—No, I cannot think of anything at the present moment.

8375. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You mentioned some of these horses by, I think you said, Hackneys, that they throve and did well; you are referring to the first cross of them, I think?—The first cross, yes.

8376. Is it not a fact that the first out-cross of any distinct breed generally does show great thriving powers, whether it is horse, or whether it is cattle, or anything else? Do you think the

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same thriving powers as you describe would continue in future crosses?—I think so from what I have been told by people who have tried the second cross, both crossing the half-bred produce back to the Hackney or crossing it to the thoroughbred. I have been told that the produce thrives very well; but I have not any personal experience of it.

8377. Then that is your opinion against, I may say, the generally accepted theory?—Yes.

8378. But you know that that is the accepted theory?—Yes, I know it is.

8379. Lord ASHTOWN.—You have tried breeding hunters. Do the farmers around you breed hunters at all?—No, practically not. They may by an accident get one; but then it is not sold as a hunter, but to some harness dealer in Clones.

8380. When you were breeding hunters you said you failed. Do you mean they did not grow?—They grew tall enough; but not with sufficient bone, and they were weak.

8381. Do you think the soil is not suitable for breeding or suitable?—I certainly don't think it is suitable for breeding hunters.

8382. You said a lot of remounts were bred in the district; how are they bred?—Mostly off the half-bred stallions.

8383. Off half Clydesdale mares or weedy mares?—Off weedy mares and off Clydesdale mares, too. If it is off the Clydesdale it is generally by a thoroughbred horse, and off the weedy ones by a half-bred.

8384. Not counting remounts, where do the horses go chiefly that are bought in your district?—They leave Ireland, most of them. I think they mostly go to the Continent; they are bought very largely for the Swiss and Italian Governments.

8385. You say you have seen the produce by the Congested Districts Board's horses, have you seen the horses themselves?—Yes, I have seen them all.

8386. What do you think of them?—I like them very much. I think they are exactly the horses to cross with weedy light mares, especially as I have seen the produce and the result of the cross.

8387. You have bred, you say, two horses yourself by a Hackney; have you had any experience of working them, or anything of that kind?—No, I sold them both. But one of them was worked by the farmer who bought it, from the time it was nearly three until it was four, on the farm, and he then sold it and got a good price for it—a good price, considering the animal, something under £60 for it. The other one was not worked at all; it was just fed and sold.

8388. Have you owned any Hackneys yourself, crossed or otherwise, except those two?—I own one half-bred Hackney at the present moment, a pony of about 14·3. I have hunted her for the last five seasons. I never got left behind on her, I know that, and I have had some very long runs. In the five seasons she has only given me two falls, and the country about us it is very easy to get falls over. Talking of that, I know another Hackney belonging to the local doctor, a Hackney bred in the congested districts, which he bought as a foal; he regularly hunts this pony, and not only hunts it but rides it across country to visit his patients; he always goes straight across the country, and when he is out with hounds he is a man it is much easier to see the tail of his pony than anything else.

8389. You keep a thoroughbred stallion yourself?—Yes.

8390. Do you get a sufficient number of mares?—No, I do not.

8391. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you considered the question of licensing stallions at all, having a Government licence?—Yes.

8392. Do you approve of that suggestion?—I do most distinctly approve of it. I should put a very heavy penalty on any unsound stallion covering any mares except the owners'.

8393. Would you follow the system adopted in several foreign countries, of putting on a very heavy penalty unless the horse is perfectly sound, for serving any mares but the owners'?—Yes.

8394. The owner may serve his own mares as he likes?—Yes; I think you can hardly prevent a man serving his own mares, if he likes, with an unsound sire.

8395. Which do you think it would pay the farmers in your district best to breed, hunters or harness horses?—Harness horses unquestionably. There are no dealers coming up into the country to look for hunters; any dealers that are there are looking for harness horses and remounts.

8396. Is there a good demand in local fairs for a harness horse that has action?—Yes.

8397. And action is the *sine qua non*; you must breed for what will bring money?—Undoubtedly; they will look at a horse to see has he action, and won't look at him again if his action is not pretty good.

8398. When you speak of remounts being bought do you chiefly refer to foreign Governments?—I think almost absolutely to foreign Governments; there may be a few bought for our own Government, but not many.

8399. There are men in the district who deal largely, quite close to you?—Yes; I believe one buys nearly a thousand horses in the year.

8400. And did one of the hunters you bred take second prize at the Navan Show in Meath?—Yes.

8401. I think you said that there were a great many half-bred stallions, but what would be your definition of a half-bred stallion that should be registered under the Dublin Society's scheme?—Well, certainly a horse with at least four crosses of thoroughbred blood. I know Captain Fife's definition of one for the Hunter Improvement Society's Record is that the horse should have four crosses of thoroughbred, and the original dam should have been a registered mare at the time. I think that is perhaps rather a severe condition, but certainly there should be not less than four crosses of thoroughbred; whereas these half-bred horses, I may mention, their sires very often are half-bred horses, and the mares may be bred anywhere; I know some to have Clydesdale blood in them.

8402. You don't think that the Clydesdale blood has been a success?—Certainly not.

8403. And it has been very largely introduced?—It was largely introduced at one time.

8404. CHAIRMAN.—I would like to know what hounds there are in your district?—A pack of harriers, when I say harriers they are 21-inch foxhounds.

8405. But they hunt hares?—Yes.

8406. Not foxes?—Not foxes; I wish there were foxes to hunt.

8407. Mr. WRENCH.—There was one thing I think you said in answer to Mr. Fitzwilliam, I think he said it was an accepted rule that the first cross from any breed was the most hardy; you said "yes," do you imply from that that the second cross from a Hackney is any less hardy?—Oh, no, not from what I have heard; I have no personal experience of that, but from what I have heard from others I don't at all imply it.

8408. It was only the general theory, not referring to Hackneys specially?—Yes.

8409. CHAIRMAN.—You think the Hackneys then are the exception to the rule?—I would not say that, that is the generally accepted idea that the first cross thrives better, because it is simply the case of fresh blood.

8410. But the second cross again?—I think the effect of the fresh blood will still tell.

8411. Although it is generally accepted that the second cross is not so good in all other breeds?—Yes.

8412. Except in the Hackney?—Yes.

8413. Mr. WRENCH.—But would not the Hackney be nearer to the mares in your district than a thoroughbred on the question of affinity in breeding?—Yes.

Mr. ROBERT M'KINLEY, Sessaghmore, Castlefin, Donegal.

8414. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Sessaghmore, on the east side of the county Donegal?—Yes.

8415. Are many horses bred in your neighbourhood?—Oh, there are a great many.

8416. What class of mare do the farmers generally breed from?—They are very indifferent at the present time, small light-legged little mares.

8417. Do you consider that horse-breeding can be carried on profitably in Donegal?—Well, to a certain extent it can. Generally the farmers in my neighbourhood, the majority of them are small farmers, varying from 20 to 40 acres of land, and they breed a young horse to do the work of the farm, and then if he turns out well he is sold to the best advantage when four or five years old, that is the way breeding is generally carried on.

8418. What class of horses in your opinion should be bred in the district?—Well, to suit the wants of the farmers themselves, to begin with, it requires a strong horse; probably to turn into a van horse or go to the Glasgow trams or something of the sort, when they turn up to a certain age, or a strong harness horse.

8419. Are the mares of the district suited for breeding that class of horse?—Yes, when you get a heavy enough horse to cross with them.

8420. What kind of a stallion do you think the mares of the district should be mated with?—The stallion that gets the most trade in the district is a cross between a Clydesdale mare and a Welsh horse, that horse is doing more trade in the country than any other, whether it is that he is letting at a lower fee than the others I don't know.

8421. What sort of produce comes from that?—A cross from the light mares and that class of horse generally brings a van horse or to go to the Glasgow trams, they begin to work these young horses at one and a half year old and they work them on until they are about four, and sell them off then to the dealers in the district for the purposes that I have mentioned.

8422. Are there many horses bred in the district?—Oh, yes, generally every farmer breeds a foal for himself every other year, I myself breed a good many horses, but I go in for a stronger class of horse, my land is very heavy and I go in for a Clydesdale horse generally. I have bred some light horses, but I have given it up, it did not pay me, I have half a dozen Clydesdale mares at the present time and I am breeding from a Clydesdale horse from them.

8423. What sort of soil is there in your district?—It varies a good deal, my land has a good deal of limestone in it, but the majority of the land is blue clay subsoil and bog land.

8424. Does it require a heavy horse to work it?—Well, the land is very hilly, the farms there are very mountainous.

8425. Do you think a heavy horse is better for the mountains?—It is better for the hills on my farm.

8426. Have you made any observations of the stock got by the Congested Districts Board's horses?—Oh, yes, I have seen some of their produce, there was a horse stood at Ballybofey, six or seven miles from my place, a horse belonging to the Congested Districts Board, "Bay Malton," a very good Hackney.

8427. What are the stock like?—Nice little foals, I have seen a good many of them, but the farmers there would require a stronger horse than a Hackney to cross with their mares, that is the opinion of a good many I have been talking to lately. When I found I was coming up here to give evidence I asked anyone that could give me information, and they say they would rather have a stronger horse to mate with their mares, they think the Hackney is too small.

8428. What class of stallion do you yourself recommend?—Speaking for myself I would go in for a Clydesdale, but of course for the neighbourhood that is entirely different. Anyone that I have been talking to wants a strong horse up to about 16 or 16.2, something like a carriage horse or a well made hunter, that would be exhibited in the Dublin Show in August, up to eighteen stone weight.

8429. Do you think you would get that from a Clydesdale stallion?—I don't know.

8430. At what age are the young stock usually sold in your district?—Some are sold at one and a half and some of them are sold from that up to five year old.

8431. Has the price of horses deteriorated of late years in your district?—It certainly has.

8432. Are there any thoroughbred sires in your district?—There is one, a horse called "Greenfield," standing in the district under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

8433. Do you know where he came from?—His sire is "Springfield," he is registered under the Royal Dublin Society.

8434. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What age is he?—I think he is an aged horse now. Greenfield by Springfield by St. Albans, I think, is the breeding of the horse as far as I can make it out. He has been under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme for a good number of years now. He belongs to Mr. Hamilton, of Raphoe.

8435. CHAIRMAN.—Now with regard to half-bred horses, are there many in the district?—Yes, there are a good many horses, very inferior horses too.

8436. How are they usually bred?—Well, I took some little notes of some of them. There is a man has a horse called "Sir William." His sire was a horse called "Windsor," and "Windsor" was out of a three-quarter bred thoroughbred mare, by a Clydesdale horse. That is mixed breeding altogether. I had it from the owner of the horse himself.

8437. Lord ASHTOWN.—He is by a Clydesdale horse out of a nearly thoroughbred mare out of a mixed mare?—No. This horse is by a sire who was by a Clydesdale horse out of a three-quarter mare.

8438. And his dam is anything I suppose?—His dam was anything at all.

8439. CHAIRMAN.—What sort of stock does he get?—The stock is not very much. I have seen a good many of the stock after him. It is very inferior, and the fee that man charges is £1 for the service and 2*s.* 6*d.* to the groom—no foal no money. That horse does about 100 mares each year. Considering the low fee he gets trade. That is where the mistake arises with us. The farmers are in such a way they are not able to pay high service fees, and they take the cheapest horse they can get. This Welsh horse I mentioned before, his dam was a Clydesdale mare, and the sire was an imported Welsh horse.

8440. Mr. WRENCH.—A Welsh carthorse?—Yes.

8441. CHAIRMAN.—You don't know anything about the breeding of the Welsh carthorse?—No; he was a horse up to 16 hands I am sure, and this horse is up to 16 hands, too. This horse with the light mares round about my district gets a fairly good beast. It is able to do the work of the small farmers when 1½ year old, and they make it work until four year old, and then they sell it for £25 or £30, and perhaps some would go to £35 when four year old.

8442. Have you any suggestions to make to the Commission with a view to improving horse-breeding in the district?—I would say three-fourths of the horses in my neighbourhood should be castrated by compulsion.

8443. How would you replace them?—Of course these men work these horses from the end of the season until the next season begins. They work these horses on the farm. I would say compensate these men for the loss of their horses, and let the Government assist them in buying suitable horses for the district, subsidise the owner, and compel him to let

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it at a low enough service fee to suit the wants of the country.

8444. What stallion would you propose?—I would propose two stallions—a carriage horse or hunter as I describe, and as well a Clydesdale horse, and give the people their choice. I am quite sure the two horses would do as much as they would be able to do in the district. I have every confidence in that. I know a friend of mine bought a Clydesdale horse in Scotland, I assisted him to buy it. He is a very good horse, and cost a good deal of money. That horse is let at £2 10*s*. People think it is too high a fee, and if he would let it at 30s. they would patronise him, but he finds it would not pay him to let it at such a low fee.

8445. You said you would also have a carriage or hunter sire. How would you get that class of horse?—That is a difficult question. From a three-quarter Clydesdale mare with a thoroughbred horse I have bred horses of that description myself. There is one mare in particular that I bred eight foals from with a thoroughbred horse. The first I bred I sold him in the Moy fair at £65 at four years old, and the gentleman that bought him from me (Mr. McGill) kept him for about three months and took him to Lincoln fair in England, and got £130 for him.

8446. Mr. La Touche.—Was he a gelding?—Yes.

8447. Lord Ashtown.—How was he bred?—By a thoroughbred horse, "Strathardle," by "Blair Athol." He is dead now. He belonged to the same man that has "Greenfield." He was about the best breeding horse we had in our country. He died this last season.

8448. Mr. Wrench.—He was a small horse?—Oh, no, he was a big horse, up to 16 hands high.

8449. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—What did you say this horse was by, that fetched £130?—He was by "Strathardle."

8450. A thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

8451. What was he sold as, do you know?—Sold as a hunter to follow foxhounds.

8452. What sort of a mare was he out of?—A three-quarter Clydesdale mare. I bred eight foals in eight successive years from the same mare and the same horse—four fillies and four colts—and they all turned out good horses. The next foal that the mare had was a filly, and at three year old I put her to a thoroughbred horse, "Hilarious"—he is under the Royal Dublin Society—and the foal that I had by that mare I sold it at the mother's foot for £17 when about three months old, to be delivered in November when the foal would be spent. It turned out an inferior beast, whether the man did not treat it well, he has it yet, but it is not worth more than £17, and the mare was a good one.

8453. That must have been accidental, because Hilarious is particularly well-bred, and an extremely strong horse, and a very good-looking horse too?—Yes; I sold that mare in Moy fair when coming five year old at £70.

8454. Then on the whole your experience of breeding from a thoroughbred horse has been a success?—Yes, with a very strong mare; but with a light mare it has not been a success. I tried it with a light mare as well, and I got a horse not worth more than £14 or £15 when four year old. I can wait on a horse until he comes to a certain age, but the majority of the farmers cannot wait, and when they breed a horse they want to put him to the plough when he is young, and as they cannot put a light horse they want to breed a strong horse.

8455. Don't you think in Ireland they want to put a horse to work early, no matter by whatever horse they are—don't you think early work in Ireland in a great number of cases is carried too far?—I think so. I don't think a young horse should be put to work until he is coming three year old, and then to light work for the first year.

8456. You say that in your district there are a number of stallions that you describe as being of a very nondescript kind?—Undoubtedly.

8457. Have they been there long, or are they new importations?—They have all been bred in the district.

8457. And used in the district?—Yes.

8458. And in fact they are to a great extent responsible for the present dearth of good mares that are in the district?—I don't say that that is just altogether the reason.

8459. To a great extent?—To a certain extent it is. I think the cause of the deterioration of the mares of the district is this—that the farmers are not so well off as they used to be, and when a man has a filly that he would like to keep as a brood mare, he has to sell her to meet a pressing demand, and consequently has to keep a worse one in her place, or one that met with an accident in youth and is not suitable for the market; I think that has more to do with it than anything else.

8460. But still you say on the whole that the mares are very bad?—Yes; they are a bad description, they have deteriorated certainly within the last ten years considerably. And then with regard to the Royal Dublin Society, "Greenfield" is quite a blank altogether, there is nothing being bred from him, only five or six mares in the season, they have no mares to suit the horse.

8461. Is that on account of the high fee or what?—The farmers don't like to breed from a thoroughbred horse, they think the progeny would be too light for their work, and that is what they look to principally, and the high service fee has a good deal to do with it too, I think, this horse is let at £3 5*s*., if you look at the book.

8462. I am not surprised he does not get many mares?—If we had a horse let at 30*s*. or £2, I don't think he would get more to do, the farmers are prejudiced against breeding from a thoroughbred horse in our district.

8463. Is that on account of the very inferior animals you have had in the district for a long time?—I think so, inferior class mares, not fit to mate with a thoroughbred horse at all.

8464. You recommend either a hunter stallion or a carriage horse?—Yes.

8465. How ought such a horse in your opinion to be bred?—The most successful breeding I have ever had is an uncommonly strong mare put to a thoroughbred horse, you will either get a suitable hunter or a very strong harness horse.

8466. How would the mare be bred?—I have told you that I bred myself from a three-quarter Clydesdale mare, the mother of these colts and fillies that I have sold.

8467. You would not object to Clydesdale blood being introduced into the sire?—I don't think it would do any harm at all; I have bred some pure bred Clydesdale horses myself; I have six or seven pure Clydesdale mares, and I have sold some of their young stock, I sold one here in June last at £50, a colt, to go back to Scotland to keep for a stud horse, of course I went to considerable expense in buying my brood mares; I bought two mares in Scotland at one and a half year old which cost me 70 guineas, I bought another which cost me £40.

8468. Lord Ashtown.—Where is the young stock bred in your district, you say they are bought sometimes as foals, who buys them?—Very few are bought as foals, I don't think I said so.

8469. When they are sold, who buys them?—Just the dealers to sell to the Glasgow trams.

8470. They are bought by dealers to go out of the country, they don't come down south?—Oh, no, they go to Glasgow principally.

8471. Mr. La Touche.—Do you think that the young stock in your country has deteriorated?—I think so, I think they are.

8472. To what do you attribute that?—To the bad

quality of the mares, because they could not keep good ones.

8473. Who did they sell them to?—They went out of the district altogether.

8474. Do you know the county Fermanagh?—Not much.

8475. You heard Sir Douglas Brooke's evidence to the effect that he attributed the deterioration of the mares there very much to the introduction of Clydesdale blood?—It may be in the county Fermanagh, in the county Donegal, it is altogether an agricultural county where I live, there are no tracts of grazing land at all, it is consequently altogether an agricultural country, and the introduction of Clydesdale blood into that country, I think, tends to improve and strengthen the class of mares more than anything else.

8476. You consider that this blood has done good in the county Donegal?—It has not been introduced sufficiently for me to give a decided opinion on that.

8477. You used it yourself, I suppose?—I bred altogether from Clydesdales, at least for the last couple of years, last year I had a foal from almost a thoroughbred mare, she is quite thoroughbred, although she is not eligible for the stud-book—from a Hackney horse that stood at Ballybofey, "Bay Malton." I had a foal from her this year, a filly, and a nice filly it is too.

8478. Have you seen any three-year-old by these Congested Districts Board horses?—No, I have not.

8479. Two-year-olds?—Well, year-olds is about the oldest I have seen.

8480. Your experience of the Clydesdale does not coincide with that of Sir Douglas Brooke?—Of course I don't know the county Fermanagh sufficiently well to say what would suit the county, I only know what suits my own country.

8481. You don't consider it is calculated to deteriorate mares in your country?—Not at all, I think they are nearly as bad as they can be at present, any change at all would be an improvement; of course there are a selected few better than others.

8482. Mr. WRENCH.—You live in the good farming part of Donegal, when you talk of Donegal you are hardly a fair specimen?—I don't know that.

8483. Is there not a great difference between your part of Donegal and the part of Donegal we have to deal with?—Well, so far as the Dungloe direction is concerned, I think this is entirely different.

8484. There is a good deal of good farming arable land about you?—It is all arable land.

8485. And some very good farms?—Undoubtedly, I hold 330 acres of land myself, all arable land.

8486. From what you have said I gather, you think, a thoroughbred horse is really no good in your district?—No; the Royal Dublin Society's schemes have been a failure altogether, the last show of mares we had there were three mares and three foals, we had to give the prizes, and we could not distribute all the money we had to give away, and that has been the case for the last three or four years.

8487. When Strathardle was there, was he largely used?—Very largely used.

8488. What was his fee?—Two guineas.

8489. Then practically he was only used by the well-to-do farmers?—An extraordinary thing about Strathardle was that, all the colt foals were exceedingly good, and all the filly foals were small and light and weedy, his filly foals were small and the majority of them curbed.

8490. But the colt foals were sound?—Some of them were curbed as well, but the majority of the filly foals were curbed.

8491. Of course hunter-breeding is quite out of the question, it is either a question of breeding an agricultural horse or a harness horse?—That is it.

8492. For harness horses is it necessary to breed them with action?—I would say so.

8493. You would say that is the chief thing to sell a horse?—Yes; but I would not go in for so much action as the thoroughbred Hackney has.

8494. Is it not necessary that there should be extravagant action on the sire's side because the mares have not very much action?—Not very much, but I believe there should be action on the sire's side, because it is that which impresses the progeny more than the mother.

8495. What is the foal like that you say you bred from a Hackney yourself?—It is a good size, a good foal, but it was a particularly good mare, and the mare was bred in the county Fermanagh by Mr. Porter Porter, of Ballinamallard; I was a judge at Enniskillen Show one season and bought the mare from him there.

8496. You say there must be a strong horse for the farmers, and, I suppose, a hardy horse; do they house their young stock in your district?—They do.

8497. They take good care of them?—They don't take good care of them, although they house them, I don't think they are well enough fed in the winter time; a young horse has a certain amount of growth to sustain, as well as to keep up the system, and it requires to be well fed.

8498. Have any of the American horses found their way into your district?—No, except a few at the very beginning, but they were soon put away again; there are none in my district now.

8499. They did not like them?—No.

8500. You have heard what has been stated about registering all horses, would you be in favour of that?—I would, of stallions, but I don't see how you could register all mares.

8501. Would you be in favour of their being licensed, too?—Yes.

8502. Can you see any plan by which you can improve the breed of mares?—The class of mares, I have studied that question thoroughly, and cannot see any way of improving the mares, except the farmers take it into their own heads to improve them themselves, and keep good mares.

8503. Are there any local shows?—Yes, a show at Londonderry.

8504. Do they give premiums for the best mares?—I got first prize for a mare and foal off a Hackney horse; I got first prize at the Derry Show with that blood mare and the foal by Bay Malton last year.

8505. Do they give any special premiums, except the prize for good mares?—None.

8506. Then the Derry Show is practically the only show of any size in the district?—The only show.

8507. Can you suggest any plan to encourage farmers to keep mares?—I don't think giving prizes to a few mares would be of any good, unless you could get mares to come up to a certain standard that would suit the judge; I don't think there would be any use in anything else, and I don't see that there would be money available for that.

8508. It has been suggested here that mares should be bought and given out to the small farmers to breed from, do you think that would be practicable?—It might, but I don't see that it would serve any good end.

8509. Supposing a young mare was left with a farmer for two years, do you think farmers would take good care of it?—I don't think they would; it would be very difficult to work, it would require to be looked after far more than any man would be able to do.

8510. Do you think you would get as good results in breeding from a half-bred sire such as you suggested, as you would in breeding from a pure-bred sire, such as a Hackney or Yorkshire coach-horse, or any other sort?—I think so.

8511. That is, a half-bred sire by a thoroughbred horse out of a strong mare?—Yes.

8512. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Wrench, in putting a question to you just now, said that you had given it as your opinion that a thoroughbred horse was of no use in your district?—Yes.

8513. Yet did you procure a very large sum of money from the produce of a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, but I was only speaking for myself when I

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mentioned that, I was not speaking of the country in general; there are very few farmers in the country farm as much land as I do—I can afford to wait.

8514. If a suitable big-boned, thoroughbred horse was standing at a low fee in your district, would they patronise him?—You would require to have more bone and substance about him than any thoroughbreds I have seen; Hilarious was the strongest horse I saw, and he would require to have more bone.

8515. Do you think the bone of the Clydesdale stallion is as strong as the bone of the thoroughbred horse?—I think so.

8516. You have never heard it was more porous?—There is a great difference in Clydesdales as well as thoroughbreds. I have seen some Clydesdale mares and their bones are quite as hard as any thoroughbreds. The last mare I bought in Scotland I would say her bone was quite as strong as any thoroughbred horse's, and as clean, nice legs as can be under any animal; although she has the flash of hair on her behind, she has not greasy, thick legs you will see in many Clydesdales.

8517. Size for size; the bone of the Clydesdale horse is as heavy as that of the thoroughbred?—Yes I think so; that is, the real, proper Clydesdale sires—we have very few of them in this country.

8518. Have you anything further to say to the Commission?—Nothing further than I would say that all stallions should be registered in the country, and subsidised by the Government, all correct and proper stallions, and they should pass a veterinary surgeon, and that stallion should be licensed to travel in the district and serve mares at a certain low fee—that is the only suggestion I have to make.

Mr. James Galbraith.

Mr. JAMES GALBRAITH, Foyle Road, Derry, examined.

8519. CHAIRMAN.—You are an auctioneer, and live at Londonderry?—Yes.

8520. Have you had any personal experience in horse breeding?—Yes, for the last eight or ten years I have been breeding horses, and paying particular attention to horses in general.

8521. Are there many horses bred in the district with which you are acquainted?—There is a fair average.

8522. What class of horses are mostly bred?—Well, cart horses, Clydesdales, harness horses, or half-bred, and the Hackney; there has been very little breeding of thoroughbreds for the past four or five years.

8523. What class of horses do you think best to breed in your district, with an eye to profit?—With an eye to selling or for profit, harness horses are the principal horses bred; they generally breed the heavy horses for their own use.

8524. Have they suitable mares and stallions in the district for breeding purposes?—No; they have not.

8525. Is there a ready sale for horses?—Yes; there is a fairly good sale for big, good stepping harness horses.

8526. Is the price as high as it used to be?—For a really good horse it is as good as ever it was; for the average, common-place horse, it is not quite as good.

8527. Has the Royal Dublin Society's Scheme been beneficial in your district?—No, it has been practically useless for mares; there was but one mare in each district when the inspection was called for—there was one in Limavady, one in Derry, and one in Strabane.

8528. Have you any suggestion to make with regard to that scheme?—I think the Royal Dublin Society has been gradually slicing the award; they started with £200 or £250 to the owner of the stallion, and the owner of the mare that received a nomination paid a pound and half a crown, so that the owner of the stallion had £250 or £300 for his season, as it is now, you may have a ten pound note or a twenty pound note; in one district the Government horse served three mares; the owner for that had £9, so they went on slicing the Royal Dublin Society's grant till it is eventually worth nothing, and they won't get good thoroughbred stallions to compete for it.

8529. Are there many thoroughbreds in the district?—Only practically one, there are two old horses, "Strathardle" and another horse belonging to Lord Brassey, called "Nailcote," but they are very old horses, and have been doing nothing latterly; there was a horse called "Greenfield" registered under the Royal Dublin Society, and he was the only thoroughbred horse within forty or fifty miles of Derry The year before last we had Mr. Herdman's "M.P.," but he didn't stand in the district last year.

8530. Where are the horses sold in your district, and what becomes of them?—A number of them are bought at home by dealers, and a number of farmers go to Moy fair; it is the leading fair for good horses—the principal fair.

8531. Have you had any experience of American horses?—No, we have had no American horses of any consequence in the neighbourhood or district; there were a few some five or six years ago, but I would not call them American horses.

8532. Have you had an opportunity of seeing any of the stock got by the Congested Districts Board's horses?—Yes.

8533. And what, in your opinion, has been the effect of the working of the Congested Districts Board Scheme in your district, as regards horse breeding?—I believe it has been of great benefit to the small farmers; it has put a horse within their reach for a small fee, which they otherwise could not have had; it is hard to get in some of the congested districts a pony stallion for the small pony mares in the district. Of course the congested district I know most of, Carndonagh, I would consider it the second best district on the list—Stranorlar would be first, and Carndonagh second. The mares are very inferior; you would be surprised to see the stock they are producing; it must certainly be the effect of the horses; none of the mares are saleable; for a dozen of them you would not give a twenty pound note—you would not take a gift of some of them.

8534. What do you attribute that to?—They are starved from their youth, and their life is wrought out of them; working from they are fifteen or eighteen months old, they are all spread of their hind quarters.

8535. They are worked out of shape?—Yes.

8536. From being worked too young?—Yes, and the work too heavy, and they are not fed.

8537. You mentioned just now a pony stallion, what do you mean?—Get a Welsh horse for these small pony mares in the congested districts.

8538. You think that is the best stamp of animal as a sire?—Yes, for these pony mares, and in that district; but, in my own immediate district, the harness horse—either Hackney or coaching horse—or good half-bred hunting horse, with three or four crosses of thoroughbred breeding. My experience in any fair or market is, that what the farmers want is a big, lofty horse with plenty of bone and substance, with a thoroughbred top, Hackney substance from the arms and under the knee, and Hackney action, with as much quality as you could give them. I could give you an instance of a horse bred in the congested districts that made £75 as a five-year old at the Moy fair. I bought the horse myself; he was 16 hands high; he was reared in Carndonagh, and he was by a Hackney sire only 15.2 hands high, and his dam was about 15.1½.

8539. What was the dam's breeding?—I don't know that I could get you her breeding; I don't know

that I could give you any pedigree for her; she was a little short-legged mare with a fair top on her and good bone too.

8540. Have you any suggestion to make to the Commission with a view to improving the breed of horses?—In the first place we are in as much need of mares as of stallion horses to breed from; the farmers if they have a good mare worth £40 or £45 she is sold, unless she develops some unsoundness, and then she is kept as a brood mare. In the North of Ireland we are only getting the cast sires of England and Scotland to breed from, both as thoroughbred horses and cart horses; they travel at a fee that would not pay any man to purchase a really good horse for—a pound and half-a-crown and guinea to a foal.

8541. Is the nature of the soil in your part of the country adapted for horse-breeding?—Some of it is very well adapted—a good limestone bottom. You asked me if I had any suggestion to make as to the improvement of the breed of horses. I would suggest that there should be a standard for brood mares as to size and quality and to every farmer of a certain valuation keeping a brood mare coming up to that standard—every year he would show her with a foal at foot, either by a thoroughbred horse, Hackney horse, or whatever he chose to breed from that that farmer get a Government grant of £5, and that all stallions should get a certificate from a veterinary surgeon, of soundness and that he was free from hereditary disease, and also some aid from Government.

8542. Would you approve of licensing stallions?—Yes, I would say that a certificate of soundness should be the licence; if not sound let him not be registered or not allowed to travel at all.

8543. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—On the whole do I understand you to say that you should prefer the Royal Dublin Society's system to return to what I believe it was originally, that is, of premiums—giving a good horse in your district a premium of say £200, and obliging him to serve mares at a certain fee?—Yes, that would be my idea, and I would suggest that at the North-East and North-West Shows, that Ulster should have control of its own money—if there is to be Government aid that Ulster should have control; it is quite capable of looking after itself in that respect.

8544. I think you said you would like to have all stallions registered?—Yes; I think that all distinct breeds of horses, Clydesdales, Hackneys, Shire, Yorkshire coach horses, or thoroughbreds, if a gentleman chooses to own a stallion and to travel a certain district, let the horse be registered as a sound sire—the registration only to secure soundness.

8545. Did you say too that all mares ought to be registered?—Not register the mares, but let there be a certain standard of quality of size and substance, and when a man owning a mare coming up to that standard if he breeds off her every year she is shown with a foal at foot he should get £5.

8546. Would not that be rather an expensive item?—Five thousand is a mere drop in the bucket if there is to be Government aid for horse-breeding in Ireland. There is ten times as much spent in other countries. The Government has plenty of money; there is no want of coin; there is an old saying it is coming off a broad back, we might as well have a good haul as none at all.

8547. Have you thought over the idea of registering mares that should be allowed to be bred from. Do you mean to say you would not allow other mares to be bred from?—Oh, yes; it is only to encourage the farmers to keep a really good mare. If a farmer has a mare worth £40 now she is sold unless she develops some unsoundness, and then she is kept as a brood mare. The Limavady Stud Company had two or three Hackneys, and several private people have Hackneys, and they seem to be breeding very well in the country; they have been able to compete at small shows favourably with the produce of the thoroughbred. I myself won the North-west Cup with a half-bred Hackney out of a three-quarter bred mare. A half-bred Hackney got first prize in a very strong class in Belfast some years ago, a class of twenty-five.

8548. As to the stallions you would like to see in the district, I think you said you would like to see a good agricultural horse?—Yes, we want that too.

8549. Would you describe the half-bred produce of an agricultural stallion as belonging to the hunter class?—What the English people are going in for now is a hunter sire, and the Hackney and the Yorkshire coach horse if you like; he is a good horse to produce harness horses.

8550. And for the smaller mares a Welsh horse?—I would say a Welsh horse is a good horse for them.

8551. In the main the small fee seems to be in your idea a great advantage to the farmer whatever the horse may be?—Certainly, a small fee to the farmer, of course if you can get a good horse; but you cannot get it unless there is some Government aid. It won't pay a man to give £300 or £400 for a good horse and travel him at a small fee, and guarantee a foal, and take all the responsibilities and risks.

8552. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—This horse that you spoke of as being bred in the congested districts that brought £75, he was not by one of the Congested Districts Board horses?—He was by a thoroughbred Hackney—a very good breed of Hackney—Danegelt or Denmark, and Lord Derby was his breeding.

8553. What was he sold as?—He was sold in Moy for £75.

8554. But what as?—As a hunter; and would give you as nice a feel as any horse could in the saddle, and would canter as handy as a pony.

8555. Mr. WRENCH.—As a rule are there many hunters bred in your district?—Very few.

8556. Is the breeding of harness horses the principal industry in that district in the way of horse breeding?—Yes, the principal.

8557. And the draught horses—agricultural horses?—Agricultural horses and harness horses.

8558. They are the two that it pays to breed best?—Yes, if you get a good strong agricultural horse you can work him from four until five, and then sell him; that horse I spoke of wrought from three-year old.

8559. Where are the most of the horses sold?—Good horses, a lot of them are sold at home, and a lot of farmers take them to Moy.

8560. Do many foreign buyers come to Moy fair?—Yes, a great many.

8561. Do they look for action in the horses they buy?—Altogether for action; if you have a horse with action in the Moy they will overlook some other points of quality if he has a go about him.

8562. It is the most saleable commodity?—Yes; you will have twenty men pulling you on one side if you have a good stepping horse, and if you have only a light horse with very little action they don't notice you very much.

8563. Have you ever seen any of the stock of a horse called "Broad Arrow" that Lord Charlemont used to have?—No, I cannot say I have, but I have heard of the horse; and I know that anything that came North that they wanted to give it a good character they would tell you it was by "Broad Arrow."

8564. That was to help to sell it?—Yes.

8565. You knew "Strathardle"?—Yes.

8566. He was a very uneven breeder, bred good colts, but bad fillies?—Yes; as a rule the mares were light, and wanted bone and substance.

8567. And were liable to curbs?—Yes, they were prone to curbs.

8568. Have you had any experience of testing the relative soundness of Hackneys and thoroughbreds?—I have had eight or ten Hackneys of my own, breeding

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between buying them as three-year olds, and breeding them, and I have not had one unsound one out of the lot as yet.

8569. Carndonagh is the district you know best?—Yes, I know it well.

8570. Do you know that the Congested Districts Board had a Welsh cob there last year as well as a Hackney?—Yes, I saw him.

8571. You have bred from Hackneys yourself for some time?—Yes, for the last seven or eight years.

8572. Have you seen much of these American horses?—Very little.

8573. You have not seen them in Belfast?—I have just seen them; but paid no attention to them.

8574. Do they do harm or good?—They do harm in this way: that they are injuring the prices of the ordinary horses; but I believe eventually the jobmasters will get sick of them. I understand from the dealers that they are soft horses.

8575. Would you be in favour of having them branded or marked so that people would know what they were buying?—It would be a wise thing to brand them; but when some people are buying a horse they buy regardless of what he is if they get what pleases them.

8576. You suggest that Ulster should have control of its own Government grant. You mean by that the North-East and North-West Agricultural Societies?—Yes.

8577. If they had control do you think they would confine the grant to thoroughbreds as it is now confined?—I am very sure they would not. They would go in for both Hackneys and thoroughbreds.

8578. About Belfast are they great breeders of harness horses?—They breed a good many thoroughbreds in the county of Antrim.

8579. And, I think, you said you had seen the produce of Hackneys in the different shows of the North-East and North-West?—Yes.

8580. And have they held their own in the show ring?—Yes, very favourably against the thoroughbred horse.

8581. Practically you have hardly any thoroughbred horses in Londonderry?—Very few. You cannot get off a thoroughbred horse the same bone and substance as off a hackney unless with a cart mare dam

8582. It is not a hunter-breeding district at all?—Yes.

8583. Any horses that come there come from the South?—Yes; a good many are bought in the South and fed and sold at Moy.

8584. And most of the horses out of that part of the country are sold to go to England and Scotland, and not to other parts of Ireland?—Very few. A good many go Dublin way. Tom M'Mahon, of Castleblayney, attends the Moy regularly and buys a lot of horses; but he sells them chiefly in England.

8585. A lot of horses that are shown in Moy come from the South and are fed in the North?—Yet a lot of farmers make a trade of going to the South of Ireland and buying horses and then bringing them to the North and afterwards selling them in Moy fair. It is the best market in the North of Ireland; it is the only really good horse fair we have in the North of Ireland. We have had several fairs in Derry, annual or quarterly fairs, but they have greatly died away. I account for that by the dealing men going into the farms and buying any good colts that are at home, they never see a fair at all.

8586. The CHAIRMAN.—You said you won prizes with a half-bred Hackney in some shows in the North; in what shows did you exhibit him?—Three-year-old geldings or fillies—the prize was for the best gelding or filly likely to make a hunter.

8587. It has been said that none but a foolish man would try to breed hunters from half-bred Hackneys—would you agree with that?—No, I would disagree with that. Let me choose my mare and I will take a Hackney stallion, and I will breed you a hunter that there will be no day too long for.

8588. Mr. WRENCH.—What kind of mare?—A good three quarter-bred mare.

8589. You would require a good deal of thoroughbred blood in the mare?—No, a good three-quarter. I have a mare that I am breeding from and I sold light weight hunters from her by a Hackney, a very good mare, gallops long and low.

8590. You don't think there is any soft blood in Hackneys?—Any person who says that Hackneys are soft really does not know them. I can drive a Hackney pony for forty and fifty miles and never lift a whip, and travel six to eight Irish miles an hour easily.

8591. Do you know how these animals are bred?—Yes, they are half-bred. I have bred some myself and bought some. I know their breeding perfectly.

8592. Col. St. QUINTIN.—What class of horses is it that is generally brought from the South and taken to the North—riding horses or draught horses?—Riding horses.

8893. Which sells best in Moy fair, those that come from the South or those that are bred in the North?—In one season of the year there is a demand for the hunter-like horse and in another season for the harness horse.

8594. But as to price?—I have seen half-bred Hackney horses to make £80, £90, and £100.

8595. Yes, and I daresay you have also known a hunter to make £80 or £90?—I have known them to make it.

8596. Do you know that the demand for harness horses has greatly decreased in the last year or two?—I would say the demand for harness horses would be double the demand for hunters.

8597. But that is not an answer to my question?—The demand for the commonplace harness horse is not so good, or the price so good.

8598. It has greatly decreased in the last two or three years?—Yes, I can account for that.

8599. We can all account for that—how do you account for it?—Owing to the introduction of electric trams and bicycles there is not such a demand for cobs and small-priced horses.

8600. Has the higher class hunter and riding horse kept his price?—Yes, and so has the high class harness horse.

8601. Do you think the breeding of the moderate harness horse is likely to be a good industry in the future?—I don't know.

8602. I mean with these electric cars and bicycles, with the less demand there is, do you think the good riding horse will keep his price in the foreign market as well as the English market?—I believe he will.

8603. Are the foreigners as keen for him?—I believe they are.

8604. Are they as keen for the harness horse?—Yes; they are very keen for a really good harness horse.

8605. Can you breed a really high class harness horse in the North?—We can.

8606. Then why can you not breed a high class hunter?—We don't go in for hunters, and have not the mares exactly.

8607. Because the English dealers tell us that their best high class harness horses are all bred by thoroughbred horses?—The dealers don't really know how they are bred.

8608. Well, they know their own business?—They do, of course.

8609. And they say they cannot buy high class harness horses in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire as they used to, and have to come to Ireland for them?—There is a prejudice against the Hackney horse by especially the South of Ireland people. I know we have had southern judges coming north.

8610. Putting the prejudice aside, it is a matter of really and truly what pays best?—I don't see if I

choose to breed off a Hackney there should be any objection by anybody. I have a right to breed what I like.

8611. Nobody says you should not?—According to the Royal Dublin Society we should not have a Hackney in the country at all.

8612. Well, horse-breeding is the industry of this country. Is it not?—Horned cattle is just as great an industry as breeding horses to an extent, if you go into it in that way.

8613. Is it not a large industry?—Yes.

8614. All you want to do is to preserve it in its highest form?—Yes, but by keeping out the Hackney stallion you won't do that.

8615. I am not saying that?—That is what the Royal Dublin Society is eventually wanting to do.

8616. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know, as a matter of fact, that the dealers who have objected to these Hackneys are the big jobmasters in London, who buy horses of from 16 to 16-2 hands high?—No, certainly not; I have known Hothersal, an English buyer, to give a long price for Hackneys.

8617. He knew them to be bred off Hackneys?—Yes.

8618. If a horse has good action in the Moy fair does a dealer stop to ask how he is bred?—He will never stop to ask what he is by.

8619. Is not the breeding of very high class horses in the hands of a very few men?—It is very few can afford to breed high class horses.

8620. And the most of the industry is in the hands of small farmers?—They don't want to bring them to maturity, and if they breed a small class of horse with action it is the one thing that will help them to sell.

8621. CHAIRMAN.—You are an auctioneer?—Yes.

8622. And you know a good deal about buying and selling horses?—A little.

8623. And you know that a great many high-class harness horses are bought and sold in Moy fair?—Yes.

8624. Do you know who the chief buyers are?—I know English buyers, Hothersall and Vanderlyn and there are several buyers from Belfast.

8625. Are there any foreign buyers?—A lot of foreign buyers. At the last Moy fair there were three from Switzerland.

8626. Did you ever hear of Mr. East?—No, I cannot say I did; it is only occasionally I go to the Moy fair.

8627. You never heard of Mr. East or Mr. Wimbush buying many horses there?—I cannot say I did.

8628. You don't know the name?—I cannot say I do.

8629. Supposing large buyers like East and Wimbush were to say they disliked the Hackney cross in harness horses, and preferred the thoroughbred cross, would you agree with them?—I cannot say I would agree with them. In a harness horse I think action is a very important thing.

8630. They won't buy without action?—You cannot always get action from a thoroughbred horse; of course you would get it to a certain extent, but not to the extent of the Hackney.

8631. You heard of the feeding system in the North of Ireland?—Yes.

8632. Where do most of the horses come from that are fed?—A number are bought in the district, and at Ballinasloe and fairs in the south.

8633. Don't most of them come from the south?—A good number.

8634. The chief number?—Yes; but there is a lot bought at home.

8635. Of a high class?—Yes.

8636. Do you think the horses bred in the north fetch as high prices as the horses from the south that are sold in Moy to Messrs. East and Wimbush?—Yes; and some of them, I daresay, would fetch more than a southern horse.

8637. But, as a general rule, which fetches the higher price?—I suppose there are more horses come from the south to Moy than from the immediate north, because they go in more for horse-breeding, I think, in the south than in the north of Ireland.

8638. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know that Messrs. East only buy about 250 horses in Ireland in the year?—I don't know that.

8639. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything else you wish to state to the Commission?—No; unless to impress on them the desirability of getting the stallions registered, so that they will be sound sires, not letting a lot of rubbish of unsound horses going to travel a district or country.

Mr. THOMAS CRADDOCK, Somerset, Ballinasloe.

8640. CHAIRMAN.—You live near Ballinasloe, in the county of Galway?—Yes.

8641. And are you acquainted with horse-breeding there and in the rest of Ireland?—I am acquainted with horse-breeding in Galway and King's county, not very much in other parts of Ireland, except what I have seen in shows.

8642. What class of horses are bred in your immediate neighbourhood?—Hunters principally, and a very bad class of nondescript wretch; I don't know what purpose he is wanted for or what purpose they put him to.

8643. There is a large fair held at Ballinasloe?—Yes.

8644. Where do the horses come from to that fair?—They come from all over Ireland, King's county, Roscommon, Galway, North Tipperary, and from all parts.

8645. Are you acquainted with the extreme west of Galway?—Yes; I lived in Connemara and lived in the Island of Achill for years.

8646. Have you had an opportunity of observing the effects of the Congested Districts Board Scheme in that country?—Yes, in Mayo.

8647. To what conclusion did you come with regard to that scheme?—From the stock I saw from all ages —from foals up to 3½, I think the Hackney cross is decidedly a failure. In those cases where I could see the mares as well as the stock, in nearly all cases they had lost bone, they had not got as much bone as the dam, and what action they had is scratchy knee action—no hind action; they had entirely lost that.

8648. What class of horse do you think the country is best calculated to breed?—As distinct from Connemara, I think the county Galway is well suited to hunters; it is decidedly a hunter-breeding county; of course Connemara is absolutely distinct; it is only a pony breeding district, mountain and bog.

8649. Do you think there are suitable stallions in the county?—A few; we want more; the prices are too prohibitive; there is no good sire in Galway standing at less than £3, and the best is £4, which is absolutely prohibitive to the farmer of £75 valuation, and he forms the largest number.

8650. What breed of stallions would you advise should be used?—Suitable thoroughbred stallions, and if there is such a thing to be got a good hunter sire —a typical horse of three, or, if possible, four distinct crosses of blood; a typical 14 stone blood hunter I should like to see. I have only known a few and they have all been exceptionally good. I recollect in Leicestershire, when I was a young man, a horse that was ridden at Melton eleven seasons, "Garibaldi," belonging to Mr. Gilmour, who got very good hunters; and there is a good horse, safe to get hunters, now standing in Tipperary, "Reliable," he was in the

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Grafton country one time, I don't know how he is bred; he is a good 14 stone blood hunter; I have known some good horses by him; I had one myself, he was bred in the Grafton country; I brought him over here, and I took prizes with him, both jumping and in the hunter class. There is a horse called "Thunderbolt," standing in the county Galway, I believe he is only a second descendant from a thoroughbred horse called "Thunderbolt," and he gets very good stock; indeed I should say there is more good stock going out of the county of Galway by "Thunderbolt," or descended from him than any other thoroughbred.

8651. They show size and bone and quality?—Yes.

8652. Has the Royal Dublin Society scheme had any beneficial effect in your district?—I don't think the last scheme has had as much beneficial effect as the previous one, that is the scheme that gave free service to selected mares. You have to show the foal, and so many farmers neglect to put their mares to a thoroughbred horse at all; they bring them into the show, and you give a prize to the foal and find it is ineligible. The whole thing, as far as the county of Galway is concerned, is the price they can get their mares served for. The small farmer cannot afford to give more than £1; the farmer next to him would give £2; that would be farmers with a valuation between £75 and £200.

8653. At what fee did "Thunderbolt" serve at?—At various fees; the nominal fee is £1, but you can make your own bargain.

8654. You don't know what "Reliable" is serving at?—No, I don't.

8655. Have you any suggestions to make to the Commission with a view to helping the industry of horse-breeding?—Well, if funds would admit of it in Galway—part of Galway and King's county—I think we require mares as much as we do anything else. I think it would be quite feasible to work such a scheme if the money were forthcoming.

8656. What scheme?—I think you could give mares to farmers whose valuation does not exceed £60 or £70. Bind them to keep them for two years and keep the stock until two years old; give them the mares free, and give them the service of registered sires at a nominal fee, or free service, if possible. We also want at least six sires in the county Galway, four thoroughbreds; and I should like to see a trial made of hunter sires. I think it would be a great benefit to Ireland if the Royal Dublin Society's certificates were only given to horses that served at a nominal fee. I don't see what good they do except they give a warranty that the sire is sound. We have 13 Royal Dublin Society registered horses serving in the county Galway, and they are not a bit of good to the farmers. There are 25 altogether, and 13 registered. There are 49 what they please to call half-bred sires, which certainly ought to be castrated at once.

8657. Have you any further suggestion to make to the Commission?—One thing I should like to say is this—that I think in selecting stallions for half-bred mares great stress should be laid on their having good shoulders, because in all half-bred mares they are always very much better behind the saddle than in front. As a rule, there is no care taken in selecting the different stallions; one county wants one kind, another county another. We want two classes in the county Galway. In my own immediate neighbourhood we have a great many mares with plenty of blood that only want more bone and substance. With these I should like to see the hunter sire crossed. We have a thoroughbred horse in my neighbourhood, Lismany, where they have bred a good many horses, "The Sinner" and others.

8658. Lord ASHTOWN.—What is "The Sinner"—a half-bred horse?—No.

8659. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You think that in your district a good thoroughbred horse is infinitely the best that can be placed in the country?—Undoubtedly.

8660. I think you said you would like to have what you call a hunter bred sire?—Yes, with as many crosses of blood as possible. I don't think you can get them with more than three to start with.

8661. You would object to having Hackneys placed in your district?—From what I have seen of their gets I certainly would.

8662. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say you would not register any sire except he stood at a moderate fee?—No, I don't see what benefit the country gets.

8663. But what would you call a moderate fee?—£1 for farmers with a valuation not exceeding £60.

8664. If you did that you would have to subsidize the stallion owner?—Oh yes, of course.

8665. I thought you meant without a subsidy?—Oh no, I was looking on them as being Government sires.

8666. The old system of nominations, the owner to get so much and the farmer to pay the rest?—That is the best because it does not interfere with private enterprize.

8667 Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—We have been told that the work of the Congested Districts Board is to benefit the small farmer—do you think the small farmer is capable of expressing a good opinion as to what the real requirements of horse-breeding are?—Not the least in the world; he would not know one horse from another—to begin with he would always take the cheapest, and if any one of local influence told him to go to a certain horse he would go irrespective of whether he is good or bad.

8668. Do you know what the feelings of the larger class of farmers and gentlemen in this district are?—With regard to the Hackney blood you mean?

8669. With regard to the strain of blood required and the condition of breeding generally in the country?—The feeling amongst the larger farmers undoubtedly is in favour of thoroughbred horses to be given them at a small fee—that is what they all complain of, we have the stallions and they are no use to them, they think that the certificate of the Dublin Society means that the stallion's owner gets something out of it, it is only the larger farmers and the gentlemen who are getting the benefit.

8670. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You were saying from your experience of the stock of the Hackneys in the congested districts—you thought the effect of the Hackney had been rather to deteriorate the breed of horses there?—Certainly not to improve them; I mean they have lost the action of the Hackney, and they have none of their own, and they have lost bone very materially. In the Belmullet district I should say there is the most unique breed of ponies in the British Isles; they are all exactly of one type, and many of them about 14 hands, and many of them I measured with over eight inches of bone, and they are very full of quality, good shoulders and plain heads, but very bad behind the saddle and with sickle hocks.

8671 You are laying great stress on the necessity of good bone, do you think the conformation of the Hackney generally, as far as his neck and shoulders go, is likely to improve the shoulders?—Certainly not, I once rode one as a hack and I hope I won't have to repeat the dose.

8672. You don't think his shoulders are riding shoulders?—Certainly not.

8673 Mr WRENCH.—You say you lived in Achill?—Yes.

8674. How long?—I was there in 1889-90 for one year.

8675 Did you also live in Connemara?—Yes.

8676 What part?—At Leenane on Killery Bay, that was the year before.

8677. You went there for sporting purposes, not for horse-breeding purposes?—That is so.

8678. And I think you visited Belmullet and Achill recently for the Horse-breeding Association?—Yes.

8679. With Mr. O'Donnell?—Yes, to Achill, but not to Belmullet, I had a local man there.

8680. How long did your visit take there?—I was there a week.

8681. Going through the district?—Yes.

8682. And what class of stallion do you recommend for Belmullet?—A nice active thoroughbred horse, when he had been in the country one year I would like to select the best of his stock to serve again in the country. I think the characteristics of the pony are so strong, they have gone on for generations with very few out-crosses, that with at least one or two in-crosses of fresh blood they could keep up the type.

8683. Did you see any of the native stallions there?—Yes, two; "Erris Chief" and Gallagher's horse.

8684. That is near Newport?—No, there are two Gallaghers, one in Achill and also one near Belmullet close to Binghamstown.

8685. I think you said you would approve of hunter sires?—Yes.

8686. If you wanted to buy half a dozen hunter sires at the present moment where would you find them?—That is one of the greatest difficulties; I saw one in that district, but I am afraid he is no longer a hunter sire, I saw a typical sire in Ballina.

8687. They are hard to find?—Yes, but they can be found; they go over to England now and again. I have known three or four sent to England and ridden in Leicestershire.

8688. Talking of the young stock I suppose you know the best are sold and the worst left as rule?—No, I don't think so, I saw one cob as a three and a half year old now for which £10 was refused as a foal.

8689. That may have been a good foal?—It must have been. It was one you gave a prize to as a foal and as a yearling; but the man said he would like to take £10 for it now if he could get it, that was in Newport.

8690. When you talk of large farmers in the congested districts, are there many?—I would not say there were any large farmers in the congested districts at all.

8691. And very few gentry?—Very few.

8692. Would you register the hunter sire before you tested him as to his stock?—Yes, because I think you would have to wait so long.

8693. You would register the hunter sire with how many crosses of thoroughbred blood?—Not less than three, four would be better, but I don't think you would get them with four; it would only mean that a pedigree would be manufactured to suit the market: three is not very far to go back.

8694. You would be inclined to give out mares to the farmers?—Yes; I think probably only a few counties in Ireland would require them.

8695. In those counties that would require them?—Yes.

8696. Would you give these horses out as two-year-old fillies or aged mares?—I would sooner have aged mares.

8697. Have you heard it suggested that two-year-old fillies should be bought from the army and given out for two years to the farmers and taken back again?—In the hands of the farmers they are much too young to breed from—I think they would require too much feeding.

8698. The only mares that you would give are aged mares?—Yes, with certain restrictions. *Jan. 5, 1897.* *Mr. Thomas Craddock.*

8699. What restrictions?—They must be answerable for the stock for a certain number of years and produce the mares every year.

8700. Mr. La Touche.—Do you know anything of what becomes of the foals sold from Connemara?—They mostly go through the country in droves; the Connemara ponies principally go from that part of Galway and the corner of Roscommon into King's county and South Tipperary, and the Belmullet ponies mostly go through the North of Sligo and into the North.

8701. Do many of the ponies from Connemara stay in East Galway?—Yes; they go through the country and everybody gets a pick, there are about fifty bought in Galway every year.

8702. Are they only sold for breeding purposes?—No, they are generally sold again when four-year-old, only bought to feed.

8703. You are a member of the Ballinasloe Agricultural Society?—Yes.

8704. Is that open to residents all over the county of Galway?—It is now, but it was not until last year. It did not take in Connemara up to last year.

8705. Did you pass a resolution there in reference to the introduction of the Hackney blood into the congested districts?—Yes, we did.

8706. Unfavourable to it?—Unfavourable to it.

8707. Was that passed after Connemara was included in it?—No, before.

8708. Connemara was not represented then?—No, it was not; it would be difficult to get anybody to represent it at any time.

8709. Was it the belief then of this Association that the introduction of this blood into Connemara would do harm to the district in which they were concerned, or was it out of regard to Connemara?—No, because you cannot shut out the breed; if they are bred in Connemara or anywhere else in Ireland they won't remain in it; they are just as likely to be found in Meath or in any other county; the stock bred in any county is not kept there.

8710. Then it was out of regard to the general horse-breeding of Ireland you passed this resolution?—Certainly. I think there is a general feeling that the second or third cross from the Hackney would do more harm than the first.

8711. Chairman.—Is there anything further you wish to state?—No, I think not.

8712. Mr. La Touche.—It would be impossible for private enterprise to supply such stallions as you think are required at fees the farmers are able to pay?—Exactly; we have an excellent sire standing in my immediate neighbourhood—Ballinafad—and he doesn't get enough mares to make him pay.

8713. Mr. Wrench.—Is that Col. Blake's horse?—It was bred by his brother, Mr. Joe Blake.

8714. Have you seen any of the stock sold up here by Ballinafad out of Connemara ponies?—No.

8715. Do you know that they had a sale, and they went at £3 a head?—No, I don't think they could be by Ballinafad.

8716. Col. Blake said they were?—I don't think he has been into a pony breeding district.

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8717. Chairman.—You live in the County Kildare, and are largely interested in the horse-breeding industry, I believe?—Yes. *Mr. William Pallin, v.s.*

8718. You also are a Fellow of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons?—Yes.

8719. And you have purchased horses for the Government?—Yes, very largely.

8720. Under what scheme was that?—I was appointed on the Purchase Commission when we were buying horses during the Russian scare in 1878, when the Government required a large number of horses I was with Colonel Marter. We bought a large number of horses for the Government.

8721. You have imported stallions, and have bred horses for a great many years?—For thirty years. I have brought a list of the stallions here, which I should like each of the Commissioners to see, a list of the stallions that have been imported by me into Ireland.

8722. You lease out stallions too?—I lease out stallions also. This is the list of the stallions that

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have been imported and used in my stud. I think nearly fifty.

8723. A great many of these horses were leased out, I suppose?—Some were leased and some were sold; some which I have sold to go abroad have stood in the country as well. I lease a number of horses each year, as well as using a good many horses at my own stud. At present I have eight stallions at the stud.

8724. Do many of the smaller farmers of your district breed horses, and of what class?—In Kildare the farmers breed principally hunters and utility horses.

8725. What stamp of mare do they usually keep for breeding purposes?—Do you refer to Kildare?

8726. Yes; your own district?—Principally half-bred mares; mares got by a thoroughbred horse out of the usual half-bred common mare, generally with one cross of thoroughbred.

8727. In your opinion have brood mares deteriorated of late years or not?—I consider the brood mares quite as good as they have been for years past.

8728. Just now you said you had eight stallions. Are the eight you keep included in this list?—They are included in this list.

8729. Would you mind telling us which they are?—Perhaps you would mark them on the list; you can then read the names?—I have imported even some others which are not marked here. These ones marked are the stallions I have at present.

8730. Would you read out the names?—"Branxholme," "Master Ned," "Astrologer," "Heckberry," "Favonian," "Wiseman," "Broxton," and also an Irish pony stallion I use as a teaser. "Branxholme" is a horse that has had four Queen's premiums, and has stood in a great many districts, and has done a great deal of good indeed. The year marked on the list is the year in which I brought each horse over.

8731. Outside the stallions you mention here, is there a sufficient number of suitable stallions in the district, standing at fees within the reach of the smaller farmers?—I consider that in Kildare we are well supplied with stallions, but I think of course those districts where stallions are not sufficient is the principal thing to look to. For Kildare, and Dublin, and Cork, and Carlow, and Limerick, and those places I think the present supply of stallions is very good indeed; very fair.

8732. You are well acquainted with a great many parts of Ireland?—All over Ireland I have had horses. Last year I had one in Mallow, in the county Cork, one in Galway, one in Waterford, another at the Compton stud in England, and five at home.

8733. So that you are pretty well acquainted with the country?—Each year I hire in different districts—Wexford, Waterford, Wicklow, different places these horses go to. My horses are all registered.

8734. Registered under the Royal Dublin Society scheme?—Yes; I may say that horses suited for one district are not suited for another. Different horses suit different districts.

8735. Have you made that a study in order to guide you when sending out your stallions?—Yes, I tried as far as possible to suit the district. Of course the men that lease have the selection as they take them, but I know myself from experience that certain horses will not suit certain districts, and I recommend them not to have them. I have at present numbers of applications for the coming season for my horses which I have not done anything with yet. Several gentlemen breeders have come to take horses from me for the coming season.

8736. Do you think the fees at all prohibitive in any case you are aware of?—In Kildare.

8737. In any part of the country?—Oh, I think yes; in certain parts the farmers are not able to pay a high fee. Of course in Kildare we have rather a rich peasantry, and in Carlow, Meath, and these places I think they are quite well able to pay for a good horse.

8738. Can you give us any idea of the fees the horses you hire out usually stand at?—The horses hired out from me usually stand at £4 for what are called gentlemen's mares, and £3 for tenant farmers' mares, some at £5.

8739. Have you attended any of the mare shows?—I have, some of them.

8740. Perhaps you could give us some idea of what you saw at some of them?—I am disappointed with the mare shows, because I do not think the farmers have come forward as much as I expected they would at the mare shows. First of all, I do not think the prizes are sufficient inducement to them to do so. I am entirely an advocate for substantial money prizes to be given for mares at these shows, and unless that is done the farmers won't come forward. For the sake of a single medal or a sovereign they will not go to the trouble of bringing a horse to shows; and up to this in Kildare—and perhaps we have as good shows as most—but from what I can gather, the mare shows have not been as good as they might have been, due, I think, to there not being sufficient inducement.

8741. Do you think the mares have deteriorated at all of late years, that is, among the smaller farmers who are under the scheme of the Royal Dublin Society?—I think the smaller farmers are not breeding so much as they were, while the larger farmers and the men that have places for them are breeding larger. The smaller farmers are not breeding as much as they were, but the larger farmers with good tracts of land find that horse-breeding is a remunerative industry, and therefore breed as largely as ever. I think the price for a good horse is quite as good as it ever has been in Ireland, and the facilities for selling him far greater than ever it has been. The Royal Dublin Society's Show is one of the largest horse marts in the world, and no doubt has robbed the fairs, such as that held at Ballinasloe and other places, of a number of horses that used to go there. Now, the Royal Dublin Society Show has become the head horse mart in Ireland, and all the people who used to go to these fairs keep their horses for the Royal Dublin Society's Show, where they have a better opportunity for selling and a better opportunity of getting them bought; buyers and sellers have a better opportunity for testing them than at the fairs, and no doubt that is one of the greatest benefits, to dispose of our immediate industry there.

8742. You have heard it stated that the sound mares are picked up by dealers in the country and unsound ones left behind?—There is a certain amount of truth in that. A needy farmer, if he has a very good mare, is tempted to sell it, undoubtedly, but at the same time I know that in Kildare the tenant farmers are very very slow to part with their good mares. Those that can afford to keep them always do. In the poorer districts, of course, the mares are sold, no doubt, because if a poor farmer has a good mare he is tempted to meet the half-year's rent by selling the good mare; perhaps one that is infirm, with a curb or a spavin, and may be an own sister; he sells the one that brings him in the money. I do not think there is any possible remedy to prevent a man from disposing of them, because it is human nature after all. They want the money and dispose of the horse. You cannot bind a man to keep these mares.

8743. Money is at the bottom of it, you think?—That is the truth of it. The only way you can encourage them is by supplying them with a sire to breed from these mares, and provided you can supply them with a sire at a price that is within their reach, it will be the means of causing them to retain their mares to breed from. If a man has a good mare, and he knows he can get the service of a really good horse for a pound, he will be more inclined to keep her and avail himself of the benefits of this horse than otherwise, and in the same way the placing of this horse, a good horse, within the reach of this man

will be the means, of course, of spreading out the benefits of the horse in the district. I am greatly afraid we can deal very little with the improvement of the mares. It is a very difficult thing to do, and as to purchasing mares, I am afraid it is far too wide a thing to come within the scope of any Commission. I mean to say it would be a very, very difficult thing to do. It would cause endless trouble, expense, and jealousy in the end, probably, in the distribution of mares. I think to give them horses to breed from that are of a high class, improving the class of horses, would be the strongest means to induce the farmer to keep his good mares to breed from them in the country.

8744. You know the present scheme of the Royal Dublin Society?—Well, the present scheme of the Royal Dublin Society——

8745. I ask you this question now because I want to ask you another following upon it?—All my horses are registered under the present scheme.

8746. As regards the mares?—The present scheme of giving prizes for the produce of these mares is a very good one.

8747. Well, now are you aware that under the present scheme there are prizes for two-year-old mares that have been stinted to registered sires?—I am quite aware of that.

8748. Also prizes to three-year-old mares with foal at foot by registered stallions?—Yes

8749. Do you think that would have any tendency to prevent young mares leaving the country?—I think it has a tendency to keep the mares in the country; I decidedly think any encouragement you can give in that way would keep the mares in the country.

8750. A dealer generally buys at three or four years old; therefore if the mare has a foal at foot the dealer is not likely to buy that mare?—I have seen several of these mares in my district which have been stinted at two years old; some of them have come to my horse, and they will be ultimately sold, and when they have bred a foal, they will have quite answered the object of the Royal Dublin Society, namely, to give the farmer an opportunity of breeding a foal from a good mare, and afterwards selling it as a four-year old.

8751. If she bred a good one it might have a tendency to prevent him selling it?—Quite so; I think it is a wise provision on the part of the Royal Dublin Society, inducing them to breed from mares of that class, and above all, to induce them to breed from mares that have been passed sound.

8752. Of course that is the nature of their scheme?—Yes, that is one of the main points.

8753. With regard to half-bred stallions, what is your opinion in connection with them?—My opinion in connection with half-bred stallions has extended over a great many years. I may state in the first instance, although I know some excellent half-bred stallions, I think it would be unwise to register half-bred stallions. I say so, because I think once the thin end of the wedge would be got in, on registering these horses you would find that unsuitable half-bred stallions, and horses unfit to be registered would be registered. At the same time I am quite sure we have had a number of half-bred stallions in Ireland in the past that have done an endless amount of good, I could name some of them; there was a horse called "Harkaway" in Carlow which I would say has more sons and daughters serving in the army than any other horse that ever stood at the stud. They are all good sound horses; he was a half-bred horse by "General" by "Red Heart," out of a mare which was of a famous breed called "Champions," clean-legged Irish horses with beautiful heads and necks, and shoulders. They have courage for a hunter, can trot eight or nine miles an hour, and draw 20 cwt. under a cart. They were specially in the district about Tullow. The cross of these horses with a thoroughbred has produced some of the very best hunters. There are several others in Wexford, "Young Elvis," out of a half-bred mare by "Old Elvis," a very famous Whalebone horse, which got most excellent horses. There are many half-bred horses through Ireland at present that are doing wonderful service, and are likely to do so. Of course we could class "Mayboy" under the head of half-bred horses, but he is a long way from it. He is really a thoroughbred horse. I at present have a very good hunter indeed, got by a horse, "Young Selim," a son of "Selim," out of a cart mare, out of a common mare, that is, by a thoroughbred horse. Mr. La Touche knows him; that grey horse I ride. He is a wonderfully good horse, and a good stayer, the produce of "Young Selim," which was a son of "Selim," out of a half-bred mare. I am quite sure a good half-bred horse of that class would do very much more good in the districts where they want to breed the utility horse in the congested districts than any other horse, except, of course, a thoroughbred horse.

8754. Have you any experience as to the breeding of hunters from Connemara ponies?—I have very large experience. I consider some of the best hunters I have seen have been bred from pure-bred Connemara ponies with a thoroughbred horse. I am at present riding a horse which I have ridden for the last three seasons, "Bog of Allen" He ran two years at Punchestown; he is out of a pony that was bought out of a drove from Connemara, and by "Favo." They have all the gift and the hardihood of the Connemara pony, with the quality and courage of the thoroughbred horse They are particularly sound. I know no animal so free from disease as the Connemara pony, and they consequently have a tendency to strengthen any delicacy the thoroughbred horse may have. I know many instances where very famous hunters have been bred direct from Connemara ponies themselves, or from their descendants in the first or second generation. I know also a very excellent hunter, a wonderful hunter, which was got by a thoroughbred horse by "Ridorroch," out of a mare, daughter of a Connemara pony.

8755. Colonel ST QUINTIN.—What size is this horse you speak of?—"Bog of Allen" won a race carrying 14 stone; he is 14 3 hands high.

8756. CHAIRMAN.—You may have heard it stated here in evidence, with regard to the bone of the Clydesdale and the bone of the thoroughbred, that the bone of the Clydesdale was as good as that of the thoroughbred horse. What is your experience?—The gentleman that said it had never seen it no doubt, but I can tell you scientifically that the bone of the Clydesdale horse is porous, the other is dense, and the difference in weight is very nearly a quarter more. There is no comparison.

8757. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I did not think it was so much?—Very nearly; it is not quite a quarter, but very nearly; the tissue in the thoroughbred is so very much denser and very much stronger. That of the Clydesdale horse is well known to be more porous, and to have less strength, and not to weigh near as much.

8758. That applies not only to the Clydesdale?—To any of those other mongrel—well soft—breeds. It is just the same with the deer; the bone of the deer is very small, and yet it is very dense; it is almost like ivory.

8759. CHAIRMAN.—I believe the bone of the fox is very close. As thick as ivory?—Yes, he requires it.

8760 I take it from what you say Mr. Pallin, that you would not have any objection to using half-bred horses, provided there was some method of keeping unsound horses and wrong ones out?—I would approve of the use of certain half-bred sires in certain districts, but I would not register them, because I think it would be a dangerous experiment. You would find ultimately that we would register horses that would not be half-breds at all. I

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mean they would be mongrels in the end. At the same time I should approve of good selected half-bred sires being sent to those districts where they need size and strength, and that these horses should be subsidised.

8761. How would you select them?—By a committee of the Royal Dublin Society. I think in the hands of the Royal Dublin Society we are safe; and they have done so much for horse-breeding already I am quite sure under their committee we would be safe in their selection.

8762. You were going to say something about the registration?—Of course, registration has really been one of the most effective checks to diseased horses in the country. It has been a great help to horse-breeding undoubtedly; yet I would not wish to say anything about registration of horses in the past, because though I am quite sure no trouble or pains has been spared by the gentleman who has carried it out, and it has been done with every care in every possible way, yet at the same time I think that the registration scheme, to have the beneficial effect it should have, should be carried out in a different way from the present. It should be carried out by a committee appointed by the Royal Dublin Society, that committee to meet in certain large places like Limerick, Waterford, Belfast, and those places, and a horse should be submitted to them for their approval. I would go so far as to say that the owners of horses should be allowed certain travelling fare to present them to the committee, and this committee should see these horses and approve of them; and, if they approve of them, they should then be examined by one or two veterinary surgeons, not local men, but men appointed by the Royal Dublin Society; and then they should be registered, and that registration should entitle them to stand in the country. Of course the present registration has been carried out with a great deal of care and judgment, indeed, by the Royal Dublin Society, and has done endless good, because it has pointed out to local people the sound and unsound horses in the country.

8763. You may have heard it mentioned here by certain witnesses that they would prefer to have stallions licensed?—I do not think it is possible. I think the licensing will consist in properly registered horses. It will be quite sufficient if horses are properly registered by the committee of the Royal Dublin Society appointed annually. I think it would be sufficient licence. I think it would be a very difficult thing to grasp, and almost impossible. You should pass an Act of Parliament to stop people from covering mares with a horse that was not licensed; just the same as you do with a public-house or anything else. Unless you bring it under the law, that nobody shall have an unlicensed stallion, the same as he could not have a public-house, you could not do it. With the present system of registration extended and well done, it will ultimately prevent the men who have unsound stallions from keeping them. Now, I was at last Newmarket sale, and we had several Irish breeders there looking out for stallions. When they saw a horse they came to me and said: "Will this horse be registered?" They do not buy any horses that would not be registered, showing that the registration system has done good already. We will find the unsound horses dying out. There are many unsound horses that are not on the register, and are getting very good horses, and they will be employed. I know two roarers at present who are breeding very well, and people go and breed from them. They are not registered; but men are able to sell their produce, and they go on breeding from them.

8764. On the matter of wind, do you think there is anything in it—that if a horse leaves the turf sound, and eventually turns into a roarer, would you take that as hereditary, and likely to pass down to his produce?—The point of roaring is a very difficult point. There is roaring from accident and roaring from hereditary tendency. If you have an accidental roarer, as many stallions I know have gone, possibly they will get sound stock; if hereditary, it invariably follows their produce if they catch a disease—they become roarers. At the same time it very often happens that horses that have left the turf sound with a family taint or a hereditary pre-disposition to roaring, when they are put to the stud they become in two or three years, rank roarers themselves, simply from the family taint. These horses would have all the disadvantages of producing roaring stock, while on the other hand you may have a horse coming from a sound family who gets a severe attack of pneumonia, and becomes a roarer during his stud life—that horse will probably never get a roarer.

8765. Conformation has a good deal to do with it?—Yes, and the hereditary taint. We have certain lines of family in the stud book that are tainted with roaring, the same as consumption or any other disease in the human subject, and whenever they get the slightest exciting cause, strangles, pneumonia, or pulmonary disease, these develop themselves.

8766. Although their formation may be against it?—Although their formation may be against it; but most roarers have a formation tending towards it.

8767. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I did not exactly gather your ideas as to the class of stallion you should recommend for general purposes of breeding in Ireland. Firstly, I understood you to say you preferred the thoroughbred?—I consider there are only two classes of horses you can breed in Ireland, or rather the tenant farmer can breed. In my remarks I refer particularly to the tenant farmers. The two classes of horses that will pay the tenant farmer to breed are hunters and utility horses. In breeding hunters it is, as far as possible, necessary they should be got by thoroughbred horses. When I say thoroughbred I do not mean weeds, which the country is full of. I mean a sound, short-legged, true-made, thoroughbred horse, they are the sort to breed hunters with. The second class, the utility horse, are horses sold for troopers, carriage horses, or general purposes, and these can be bred very successfully from half-bred horses. By a half-bred horse I mean a horse got by a thoroughbred horse out of a cart mare. The best class of cart mares are clean-legged Irish mares. There is no doubt we had a breed of cart horse before the introduction of the Clydesdale; or before the country was poisoned by other breeds coming in, we had a breed of cart horses in Ireland—no distinctive breed, but an enlarged Connemara pony. Almost every county in Ireland had its own special breed of cart horse according to the requirements. If it was an agricultural country they were of a heavier class, on other lands they were of a lighter class, and just in the same way it has gone down along, till you come to the West of Ireland and Connemara, where the pony itself has gone down there. I might refer to a breed of horses which were in Carlow called Kepple horses, they were called the Birds, they were originally the descendants of an old blind stallion in Carlow, a son of Bird-catcher. They were crossed with these clean-legged mares, and produced some of the very best utility horses we had in the country—horses that can plough, go in harness, or do anything. A large number of these horses went into the army and were first-rate troopers; they had size, bone, and were quick, sharp horses.

8768. The groundwork of their blood was thoroughbred?—Oh, yes, the tap root was Bird-catcher.

8769. In your opinion could the required class of half-bred stallion be procured now?—Yes; I think at the present time you could not get quite the actual class coming from that clean-legged draught horse, but there is no doubt that half-bred horses, good hunting horses could be picked up, horses with size and that were good hunters themselves and with

bone, they could be bought and sent to districts where size and bone is needed.

8770. You told me about the mares, should you restrict the service where there are subsidised or registered stallions to good or sound mares, or should you allow any mare to go?—I should make every mare that claimed a subscription to a subsidised stallion produce a certificate of soundness from some veterinary surgeon that she was free from hereditary disease. It could be very easily done, and it would be a protection to the horse, as well as to the men themselves.

8771. Do you think that breeding from a two-year-old in any way damages her in after-life?—I think it prevents their growth for the time being. I think breeding from a two-year-old mare stops their growth to a certain extent for a year, but if they do not continue to breed from her she possibly pulls it up again as soon as the strain on the system is taken away.

8772. So that, on the whole, you would not advocate breeding from a two-year-old?—No.

8773 Not one foal from a two-year-old?—No; I have seen some very good effects from it, but I think it detracts. I should not breed from them till they are three year old.

8774. On the matter of these Hackney stallions which have been introduced within the last few years, have you seen a good deal of them?—Yes; I had the pleasure of seeing last week the Congested Districts Board stallions and going over them. Previous to that, I was down in Kenmare in May, 1895, and saw a horse there that was used by the Board I went to see him specially, and I think he was perhaps one of the greatest brutes I ever saw. Of course he had gone through a very heavy season, had covered perhaps nearly a hundred mares, and there were only the two ends of him left. The head and neck and tail and quarters were there but there was no centre piece, and he looked like the horse King William rides in College Green. I have a letter here I wrote to Captain Taylor, of Kenmare, some time ago. It touches on the point about which Mr. Fitzwilliam has asked me. I wanted to find out about these horses, and I wrote to him. This is the letter—

"The young Hackney horses here are not a bad lot to look at, but, of course, I mean this comparatively, as for years we had nothing but the very worst type of stallions in this part. In fact I think some law should be passed prohibiting such horses contaminating the blood of any of our old mares that are left. The foals of the Hackneys must be looked on as better than the offspring of the local stallions I allude to, but I feel sure that if a thoroughbred stood here the foals would be infinitely better. Everyone who knows anything of horses can testify to the staying powers of thoroughbreds. There are great differences of opinion as to the staying power of Hackneys. I am of the same opinion as one of the gentlemen examined lately in Dublin that the thoroughbred can do anything the Hackney can do; but I can go further, the former can do what the latter cannot, therefore why spoil the true blood that cannot be questioned by importing here horses that a serious question arise as to their staying powers."

8775. That is from Captain Taylor, a local man?—I wanted to find out about the produce of that horse I saw.

8776. What district is that?—Kenmare; I saw the horses at the Congested Districts Board stud last week, and was greatly struck with the excellent management and beautiful arrangements, and the horses themselves seemed, I thought, a very good class of horses, a fair class, very good of their class and excellently cared. In fact I thought it a most perfect establishment, with perfect arrangements, and great credit is due to those connected with it, but, as I said on leaving, if the same amount of trouble and pains and expense had been taken with a few thoroughbred horses or suitable horses, it would have done more good than could possibly be done in years. It is not now, but in years to come we have to look at this Hackney breed; the contamination it will bring into every county in Ireland. It will percolate into every county. As an old breeder of thirty years experience I tell you, you have it in evidence that no dealer or hunting man will have anything to do with a horse with a Hackney taint if he can get any other sort. The result is that, as the papers collected by the Horse Breeders' Association testify, the large horse dealers in England are of one opinion, and will ultimately shun the districts where the produce of these horses have been. Our best industry is imperilled to the greatest extent, and it is irreparable. That is my opinion. It will percolate beyond the districts where they stand at present. They will go into Meath, Carlow, Kildare and other counties. It is in two or three generations we will find their artificial action; want of power, want of stamina, and their delicate constitutions coming out in those good horses which have made our name famous.

8777. You think these Hackney stallions, even though they may be calculated to get good looking horses in this first generation will do great damage to the prestige of the Irish breed of horses in future generations?—That is thoroughly my idea; I consider it is not in this generation, but the poison they are producing, and will produce, is extending and will extend all over Ireland.

8778. Have you seen much of the produce of the Board's stallion?—Yes, several I have seen it in England too. I have not seen many of the produce of the Congested Districts Board's horses, but I have seen the horses themselves.

8779. Have you seen other stallions, Welsh and Barbs?—Yes, and I think next to hunting stallions you could not make a better selection than the Welsh cart horse. He is a hardy horse, a horse with a constitution, and at the Congested Districts Board's stud I saw two or three very good horses, which I think certainly are most suitable to the wants of the smaller farmers in the poorer districts. I had considerable experience on the Purchasing Committee in 1878, in Wales, and we purchased a large number of Welsh horses for ambulance purposes, and saw there a large number of these Welsh stallions of which the produce were most excellent. I bought a large number for ambulance work; short-legged Welsh horses; and I am sure these Welsh stallions would be found a most useful breed to cross with our Connemara ponies, because they are something of the same tribe themselves. You know, one of the most mistaken ideas—and it seems to me the idea of the Congested Districts Board—the horse that went to Kenmare last year, I saw him last week; he seems to be a horse about 16.1. The idea seems to be that if you put a sixteen hands horse to a twelve hands pony you must breed a horse fourteen hands high. That is a most fatal idea. The result is you breed horses with the head of a Hackney, which is not handsome, with the body probably of a pony, and the legs of its grandfather or grandmother. That is practically the result.

8780. As to the Arabs and Barbs, have you any opinion?—I have had an Arab for two or three years. I think they are really very useful, and would be very suitable in districts where ponies are wanted. Their hardihood is the great thing.

8781. Would you like to see the Welsh horse and the Arab or Barb introduced into many of these districts?—Yes; and placed within the reach of these tenant farmers.

8782. Amongst Connemara ponies too?—Yes; I should think you could select excellent Barbs that have played polo in the country, and that are very often sold. They would make excellent stallions if placed at the disposal of these people

8783. You put great value on the present prestige

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of the Irish bred horse?—I think we are admitted to be the best horse-breeding country in the world. We wish to keep it up. If we do we must breed the very best. The only way to make breeding pay, if we breed horses, dogs, sheep, or anything else, is to breed the very best of its class. You must not breed anything that will deteriorate it. It is exactly the same in breeding Connemara ponies. To improve them will be to produce a horse that will be the best of their own class, which will be the Welsh horse. You do not want to put them to a thoroughbred stallion, or a cart horse stallion, or any other stallion three times their own size. You immediately get an unevenly bred animal.

8784. You think that the loss of the prestige that the Irish bred horse has at the present time would be a great loss to the Irish farmer?—I think it is our strongest Irish industry.

8785. You believe that any experiments as regards the introduction of new breeds, whatever they might be, might be damaging to the prestige of the Irish horse?—I quite agree with you. My idea is that when we have been so successful I do not see why it should be rendered doubtful.

8786. You think that the keeping of stallions that you do not approve of in districts such as the congested districts would eventually filter through into other horse-breeding districts of Ireland?—I am quite sure they will. I am quite sure the result will be this: the dealers won't buy these Hackney horses, and they will ultimately find their way into fairs and horse marts and places; and percolate into other parts of the country, to be used by farmers for breeding purposes, and perhaps in ten or fifteen years' time the mistake will be found out.

8787. Lord ASHTOWN.—Do you think half-bred sires would be wanted in some parts of the country?—Yes; in connection with thoroughbred sires. There are parts of Ireland where good strong half-bred sires would be the greatest benefit.

8788. Don't you think the Royal Dublin Society should recognise these sires?—Yes.

8789. But you would not register them?—I would have them on a register, but would not register them in the same way as a thoroughbred.

8790. Not on the same footing?—No.

8791. But you would not object to their recognising these horses in certain districts?—No; I should recommend he should have a licence if he passed the committee.

8792. Or a recognition?—Yes, or a recognition from the Royal Dublin Society. I mean to say that the danger of registering a half-bred horse is so great. It is just like letting a half-bred horse into Weatherbys' stud book. Over and over again there are instances of horses which we know are thoroughbred horses, like Mayboy, but Weatherbys say "No, we cannot take them in." We recognise that.

8793. The Royal Dublin Society does not at present register mares; don't you think they might give nominations to light brood mares, to half-bred horses, and recognise them in that way?—That is the way I would do it. I would give certain selected mares free nominations to these horses, or help them to pay in a certain way. But I would not call a horse fit for registration that had not three distinct crosses of thoroughbred, that was got by a thoroughbred horse, his dam got by a thoroughbred and her dam, after that I would not go back.

8794. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I wish to ask you about a subject that has been very lightly touched on up to the present; a few practical questions, with regard to the production of military horses in Ireland. Lord Rathdonnell spoke of re-mounts; you have had a great deal of experience of government horses, and the government to a certain extent feels itself mixed up in this question of horse-breeding in Ireland. It is to a very small extent, and the question is—I am speaking of the military department—whether they could come forward with any scheme that would assist them in their purchase of military horses. Of course you have to take into consideration the cost of production, but with regard to the question of the Hackney, I should like to know what your idea is as to the first essential point in the conformation of a horse from a military point of view?—I have bought five hundred troopers for my regiment, and the first essential in the formation of every trooper is his shoulders. Without shoulders it is impossible to carry a military saddle; it goes over his head. I have never seen a Hackney yet with shoulders to carry a man; that is an admitted fact. On that ground I think Hackneys are quite unsuited to produce horses suitable for riding purposes for military use.

8795. Well then, independent of the riding horses, we have to buy a great number of what you may call different draught horses, which are for the various positions in the teams of artillery and transport. They require a certain amount of weight with activity. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood with the mares at present in Ireland, will give us the stamp of utility horse we require for this purpose?—I do not, because I think the Hackney action is an action that is a waste of power. If you want a horse to go twenty miles you want him to be able to get over that twenty miles with the least amount of exertion to himself, and the least loss of material. If a horse takes up his foreleg and brings it up to his chin, and puts it down again in the same place, it is an absolute waste of power. Therefore a horse with that class of action would be absolutely unsuited for your transport. I do not mean to say that you might not possibly find a horse got by a Hackney horse without this class of action; but if they have this artificial action, I should say they would not be suited for the work for which you require them.

8796. Well there is also another question with regard to the possibility of forming Government studs in the country for the purpose of assisting the military horses. I must tell you beforehand there is a mistaken notion as to the influence military horses have on the breeding in Ireland, because a great many people think it has a very large influence whereas it has a small one. The number that is required by our Government is so small, it practically has no effect. At the same time they naturally would be anxious to assist in any way they could the industry of the country, and the question is whether it would be advisable in any way to form depots to buy more directly from the farmers, and to keep the young stock, and as to whether it could be done in an economical way. I don't know whether you have thought this out; it might require consideration?—I have thought it out. I think the present system has worked very well. I do not think Government studs or places to buy young horses, and keep them over for Government use will be successful for this reason, that you may buy a horse as a yearling or a two-year-old, and when he comes to be a three-year-old, when he is needed he may be a different animal altogether. You will have in that case a large number of misfits and unsuitable horses, and I think the present system of the purchasing officers attending at the different places, the large fairs, and selecting the horses themselves every three or four months in the year, and sending them on to the regiment, is far the most economical course, and the wisest and most practical that can be adopted. Government breeding studs will never pay. Breeding studs will pay best when managed by private enterprise, and if that private enterprise is assisted by Government it is the way to enable it to do so. When a man's own money is at stake it makes him more careful and more guarded in his selection. I think there is only one way I could say that the Government could give this Commission on the horse-breeding of Ireland assistance, and that would be to make some arrangement, or that the parties should come to some decision with reference

to placing the cast trooper mares, say under twelve years' old, at the disposal of local breeders; disperse them about the country for breeding purposes. I am sure each regiment has annually from ten to twelve or fourteen. I know they are sold at Newbridge for nominal sums, and go to hackney cars and for other purposes. If a certain number of these were placed at £5 each or £2, or at a nominal sum, at the disposal of those interested in promoting a scheme of Irish horse-breeding, to give them about in those districts where they are needed, not in the rich central part of Ireland, but in those districts where the Congested Districts Board is doing good, I think it would be a great benefit, and one of the ways in which the authorities could serve Irish horse-breeding considerably. There are a large number of useful mares that are broken down, meet with accidents perhaps, or something of that sort, that would make excellent brood mares. These men in remote districts have no opportunity of seeing or knowing about these mares.

8797. Do you think a farmer would take a mare of that description—broken down, so as to be incapable of work—to breed from?—I think they would get sufficient work out of them to pay for their keep. I do not think they would keep them to do nothing. Every one of them would plough and cart and do something; and I am sure, if recommended by this Commission, it would have a very beneficial effect hereafter in dispersing perhaps a hundred or two hundred mares a year, which would be the very greatest benefit to the poorer farmers in the country. Let them pay for them at so much a month or a half year, or in some way or other. That, of course, is an idea which would have to be worked out under a proper scheme or system. It is an idea which has often been put forward, and I think something might possibly be done with it.

8798. You said that in breeding horses, dogs, or anything else, you wanted to breed the best you could?—Yes.

8799. To breed up and not down?—Yes.

8800. And you say that at the present moment there is a particular class of well-bred stock that Ireland possesses which has been lost in most countries by the introduction of mixed blood—that Ireland stands almost aloof, both as far as the British islands are concerned and as far as foreign countries are concerned, with that particular class of stock, and that the introduction of any mixed blood is to be deprecated?—Those are my opinions. I think the introduction of any mongrel blood into the country is a tendency in the wrong direction.

8801. Mr. La Touche.—Do you think it so absolutely essential that the stallions should be sound?—I think the mares should also be sound. I think it is very essential also to have the mare sound as well as the stallion. It is all the better to have them both sound.

8802. As a matter of fact, I was reading the evidence that Admiral Rous gave before the Commission in 1873, and one remark he made was that there is hardly any old stallion of twenty years old that does not become a roarer. They become roarers from corpulency, and fat as a rule. They are not roarers in the same sense as other horses; it is the result of the life they live. Of course if you leave a horse in the stable and feed him up, his respiration becomes impaired.

8803. Colonel St. Quintin.—That is not what you call absolutely a practical roarer?—No; there is much difference.

8804. Mr. La Touche.—Would you forbid him to cover?—He covers and does no harm.

8805. I say would you forbid him to cover?—No.

8806. But he would be forbidden to serve if unsound. Suppose I bought a horse in England to cover in Ireland, why, the Veterinary Board would condemn him as a roarer?—If you sent me to examine him, I would pass him practically sound for breeding purposes. I think we should be able to detect those horses that are roarers from disease and roarers from merely habit—stable management. I quite agree with Admiral Rous's remarks that it would be very difficult to find a twenty-year-old stallion whose respiration was not more or less impaired from his life.

8807. Admiral Rous goes in the opposite direction in another case. He speaks of the horse named "Taurus," belonging to the Duke of Bedford. He was a roarer, but never got a roarer, and in all human probability, he says, it was hereditary?—Well, we know lots of horses that are roarers that did not get roarers. I know lots of horses that are known to be confirmed roarers that did not, in a number of years at the stud, get roarers. That roaring is very different from the other kind. In fact, Lord Rathdonnell, you know that horse "Harkaway;" he was a desperate roarer, and his produce are particularly sound; I have met several of them.

8808. Then there was the "Melbourne" sire, of a very celebrated family; Admiral Rous and Lord Falmouth agree that he was a roarer. But don't you think these instances turn to prove that there are great difficulties in the registration of stallions for soundness?—That is the very point I wish to suggest upon. I suggest the advisability of having a committee to approve of these horses, and also three veterinary surgeons—not one. It is a most invidious position to put one man in, to select him alone to examine. It should be done by a committee that would be able to see in these cases the very points you touch on which are most important, especially the point on the advisability of admitting the horse.

8809. Even though he might be a roarer?—Even though he might be a roarer, if it was not likely to interfere with his progeny, or interfere with the results in the place he was going to be used for.

8810. As regards the soundness of the mares. That seems to be another even still greater difficulty?—*Witness*—Don't you think my suggestion with regard to each mare that would be entitled to the service of these horses if free from hereditary disease would do? The certificate would be a safeguard to an extent.

8811. That she had not roaring, spavin, or curbs?—Yes.

8812. How are you going to examine a brood mare?—The possibility is that she would be examined before she was heavy in foal to know that she was not a rank roarer.

8813. I can't see the possibility of being able to give certificates to brood mares for soundness. For instance, you may get a perfectly sound mare at two years old who at five years would be perfectly useless?—I would not have her examined every year. You get your certificate when two years old, and that entitles her afterwards.

8814. She may be sound at two years old before she does any work, but as soon as she does any work she becomes unsound. On the other hand you may have a mare ten years old who does eight seasons' excellent work, and then becomes unsound with a sprung hock?—You would not reject her for sprung hock. You would get a certificate with the mare, and that would carry her through wherever she went to stud to be sent to these Government horses. There would be always a great deal of difficulty about this question of soundness and unsoundness. It is one of the most difficult and most troublesome points, and all that could be done is to lessen the risks of it as much as possible.

8815. As regards our county you are aware, or at least it has come to my knowledge rather since this Commission has been sitting, that there are a very considerable number of so-called half-bred horses not advertised used there?—Yes, there are.

8816. I suppose you agree with me that the use of these horses does not tend to improve the breed?—

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They don't improve the breed, but unfortunately there are farmers who will breed from them. Many owners of these half-breds have a large circle of relations who all patronise them. But those horses will gradually die out as the registration increases, and as the better horses are placed at the disposal of the breeders this class of horses will gradually find its own level.

8817. Don't you think these horses are generally used from the fact that they cover at much lower fees?—That's the fact. They cover at anything they can get.

8818. Is it possible these horses would be quite put out of the market if really suitable sires were placed at the disposal of the small farmers at the same fees that these horses cover at?—Quite so. But to do so they should be subsidised.

8819. It would be absolutely necessary?—Yes; it would not pay without a subsidy.

8820. It would not pay any private enterprise?—It would not pay any private enterprise to do it.

8821. For the breeding of horses in our country you think the thoroughbred horse is certainly the most suitable?—Certainly the most suitable.

8822. You saw the Hackney stallions of the Congested Districts Board lately?—Last week.

8823. Have you seen any of the stock got by these horses?—I have not, except what I saw at the Congested Districts Board's farm. They were moderate.

8824. Were they bred at the farm?—Some of them were bought, I think, and some were bred there. There were only a very few of them, so that you could scarcely form an opinion about them. They seemed useful enough. The horses themselves were very good of their class.

8825. Have you had any experience of the Hackney horse?—Yes, I had personal experience of them in England, driving them. I have also seen a great deal of them in England. I never bought one for the regiment because I was always strongly prejudiced against admitting one in. I have used them in coaches, but I avoided, as far as possible, ever having a horse with a Hackney strain in him. They don't stay. They are the worst-constitutioned horses in the world, and I may tell you as a professional man that whenever they get sick they die. It is a very extraordinary thing—they have no recuperative power. If you take two horses, one a Hackney and the other a thoroughbred, and they both get an attack of inflammation of the lungs and have the same symptoms, the Hackney horse is sure to die and the other to pull through, because the Hackney has not recuperative power—he has no stamina.

8826. In India had you anything to do with the Government breeding?—I was not in India, but in Africa. I went through a good deal of the horse-breeding in Africa. There are some very large studs there.

8827. You heard some of the witnesses to-day state that the mares of the country were too bad to put to a thoroughbred horse. Do you think the fact of a mare being very bad is sufficient reason for sending her to a worse horse than a thoroughbred horse?—No; on the contrary, I think that these very bad mares should have an opportunity of getting a thoroughbred horse, a short-legged horse that would be suitable to the district. If a pony district I would not aim at breeding a great big horse, but put a pony sire to them. A little horse called "Watchspring" has done wonderful benefit. The produce of this horse with small pony mares are all useful, sharp, quick animals, and sending a small horse to these districts where even the mares are bad would improve them considerably.

8828. I was talking of the county Donegal?—I should send them a good strong coarse thoroughbred horse and that would improve them, no matter how bad the mares were.

8829. You don't agree with the witnesses who say that the mares are too bad to send to a thoroughbred horse?—I don't agree with them at all. The simple reason that they breed from a bad horse is because the Irish farmers in these districts looks at the price the first thing, and the price is what guides them and not the horse. If they get a horse for 5*s.* and another for 10*s.*, they will send to the 5*s.* horse, no matter what he is.

8830. A gentleman here this morning said that if a thoroughbred horse was sent to his district in the county Londonderry, to stand at equal fees with another sort of horse, the thoroughbred horse would get nothing to do?—Well, if he was a good strong thoroughbred horse I am perfectly certain he would—if placed at the same fee.

8831. You think he would?—I think if he didn't it would be the fault of the owners of the mares, and if they didn't do it one year they would send when they saw by the foals of a year that it was a benefit. Of course you cannot make these sweeping changes in a moment.

8832. Mr. WRENCH.—You said you would not approve of Government studs, but would of aid being given by Government to private studs?—Not to private studs, but to subsidising horses belonging to private studs.

8833. Take your own instance. Say you had eight thoroughbred stallions, in what way would you let Government assist you?—I don't want any assistance for my stud, but I mean, to subsidise horses that would be sent to these districts. If you wanted to send a horse to a certain district, and the committee selected one and the owner of the stud wished to send it, it would not pay him to send a horse whose cost was up to £500 to a district like Donegal to cover mares at ten shillings each; so that the horse should be subsidised.

8834. That is, something on the former plan of the Royal Dublin Society?—Somewhat on the same plan.

8835. On what ground do you form your opinion that each county used to have a separate breed?—From thirty years living in Ireland.

8836. From experience during the last thirty years?—From experience during the last thirty years.

8837. You have not been able to trace that up or to find documentary evidence of it?—I have followed the thing very carefully, and I know from experience that you can go to almost any county in Ireland, and like the people that live in the county, the horses belonging to it have their peculiarities.

8838. Derived from one or two special sires?—Derived from one or two special breeds of sires that have existed in it.

8839. At what period do you think the foreign blood—the English blood like the Clydesdale began to come largely into Ireland?—During the last thirteen or fourteen years there has been a large introduction of Clydesdales and other breeds.

8840. And you don't think that before there was any cart horse blood brought into the country?—I am well aware that there was, but not in the same quantities as there has been since.

8841. Fifty years ago there was very little cart horse blood?—Very little, I think. Fifty years ago the horses were entirely bred in the districts in which they were used.

8842. They were practically of the pure Irish breed?—Of the pure Irish breed, but the facilities for exporting them out of the country and taking them away didn't exist then that exist now.

8843. Do you know the congested districts?—Yes, I have been through Kerry and Connemara.

8844. And Belmullet?—I have not been to Belmullet.

8845. Or Achill?—No; not to Achill.

8846. Do you know Louisburgh?—No.

8847. Or Clifden?—I have been as far as Clifden.

8848. And Oughterard?—Yes.

8849. Do you know Donegal?—I don't know Donegal.

8850. What sires would you place in the congested districts if you had to purchase sires at the present moment?—I should have three classes of sires. I should have a small, thick, stout, thoroughbred horse with action, for certain districts; I should have a half-bred—a strong half-bred horse of the class that I referred to, namely, a horse of three crosses of thoroughbred; and Welsh cobs, similar to the Welsh cobs you have at present, on the same lines as the Congested Districts Board's cobs, which I think are very useful ones.

8851. Would you have any Arabs or Barbs?—I might have them occasionally in some districts. But they don't do so well, I find. I have had an Arab and a Barb pony standing at my stud, crossed with ponies, and I am disappointed in their produce, rather. There is a want of bone in them.

8852. Is it always the case that a small thoroughbred horse will also breed small produce?—Not at all; but still it is more likely to breed an animal (from the small mares) with an equalised conformation.

8853. On what grounds have you formed your opinion that Hackneys are so delicate of constitution?—From the experience that I have had amongst them—a lengthened practical experience.

8854. You have been called in professionally to attend to Hackneys.—Yes.

8855. Where?—In England.

8856. In what part?—When I was quartered in England; I have seen quantities of them.

8857. Where?—In Leeds, Manchester,—and not only from my own opinion, but also from the opinion of several very eminent veterinary surgeons who have been largely called to attend on them.

8858. It is the general opinion of the profession?—It is.

8859. CHAIRMAN.—From what you said, I take it you think a good scheme could be made out of the old scheme of the Royal Dublin Society and the one at present in force?—Yes.

8860. Between the two you could make a good scheme?—Yes. I have written a few suggestions, which, if you allow me, I shall read. They perhaps might be of use.

8861. Would it be well to hand them in?—I will if you wish, but perhaps it would be better for me to read them. My first suggestion is—"To encourage by subsidising good, sound, suitable stallions to stand in certain counties which are not now sufficiently supplied."—That is, referring to districts which are now not supplied with stallions, because I think it is quite unnecessary and would be absurd to subsidise stallions in the central districts of Ireland, where there are large quantities of stallions. The object would be to subsidise stallions where they are needed. "Second. The distribution of the grant, as far as possible, to local societies and committees, to work under the Royal Dublin Society." I am quite sure local societies are really the best judges of what they want in the districts, but they should act entirely under the Royal Dublin Society, and I believe they should have the power of distributing a certain sum of money. "Third. Subsidised stallions to cover a certain number of tenant-farmers' mares at low fees, according to certain rates of valuation." This I think is a most important thing, so as to enable the stallions to be within the reach of smaller tenant farmers. "Fourth. Substantial money prizes for brood mares at local shows," which I think is the only way of keeping the mares in the country. "Fifth. The registration of stallions by the Royal Dublin Society, but to be done for the future by committees appointed for each district, with veterinary surgeons attached." I think I have already referred to that. My sixth suggestion is one which the members of the Commission will think a strong one. "Sixth. The elimination from Ireland of the horse known as the Hackney stallion, excepting those kept by private studs."

8862. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You object to having half-bred stallions registered, but don't you think the registration of the half-bred stallions would be valuable in so much as it would give confidence to the farmer or the public that the pedigree of a stallion was exactly what it professed to be?—I quite agree with you; I quite think that, as I already said, the half-bred stallions that would be subsidised should be recognised by the Royal Dublin Society in some way that would give a guarantee to those that breed from them that they were bred in this way and were sound and had the approval of being deserving of a grant of the subsidisation.

8863. That would be almost registration?—Yes; it would be, but it simply would not let them into the list on the same footing. It is simply that I am afraid that if you put half-bred stallions on the register it will be an almost impossible thing to draw the line afterwards, and it will be very dangerous. But if you have a stallion with three crosses of thoroughbred in him by a thoroughbred horse himself, and with the make and shape of a hunter likely to breed the class of horse that is required in the district, and then have him subsidised by the Royal Dublin Society, I think he would be a most useful animal. Witness subsequently added—Perhaps in reference to registration you will permit me to say that if the half-breds were registered in a separate register it might meet the wants.

Mr. H. A. ROBINSON, Roundstone, Galway, examined.

8864. CHAIRMAN.—You are a land agent, I believe, and you live near Roundstone, which is almost the extreme point of the west of Galway?—Yes, my lord.

8865. You are well acquainted, I presume, with the congested districts, and the horses which are bred in the county Galway?—Yes, my lord, I know them very well

8866. Will you describe the horses bred in your neighbourhood?—Do you mean the horses belonging to the district, or the stallions the Congested Districts Board have sent there?

8867. The horses native to the place?—The stallions are very bad, indeed: the mares are fairly good. The small country farmers, as a rule, sell the foals at six months, they are sold in the fairs of Clifden and Oughterard, and go away. Some of the mares are very good, and have good bone. They are small, about 14 or 14.2 hands—hardly any higher than that.

8868. Are there many horses bred there?—Yes; a large number.

8869. What sort of stallions are there principally used there?—The native stallions are very bad indeed: nothing could be worse.

8870. A bad class?—Very bad.

8871. What sort are they?—Just anything at all in the shape of a horse.

8872. Are they horses or ponies chiefly?—Ponies, not horses.

8873. Have the ponies deteriorated much in Connemara latterly?—The price has deteriorated very much. I would not say there is much change in the ponies. The foals that used to go at £5 a few years ago are now only going at from £2 to £3. I saw them on the 17th December last in the fair of Clifden—plenty of them selling under £3.

8874. At the present moment there is less given for the foals than there used to be?—Yes; much less.

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But I don't know what the drop in value is—that the foal is much worse or is anything worse, but the *prices* for these ponies have come down very much. I suppose the demand for them is not so great now.

8875. When did you notice this first take place?—For the last two or three years: certainly for the last two years.

8876. Have you been able to form any opinion as to the stock got by the Congested Districts Board's Hackneys now in your neighbourhood?—Yes, I have seen a great many of them, but I myself don't care about the Hackney. I have had thoroughbred stallions myself, and I like them much better. I had "Watchspring" in Connemara, and I also had another thoroughbred horse called "Golddigger": he was by "Balfe." I had "Watchspring" for three years under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme.

8877. What sort of stock did he get?—Very nice stock indeed. I have a great many of them myself.

8878. Did many of them go out of the district as foals?—Yes, a good many. Some have been kept, and a good many have been sold as two-year-olds and yearlings. Some gentleman went down and bought a good many. He bought some from Mr. Berridge the other day, and he would not have anything but "Watchsprings" with a view to make polo ponies of them.

8879. Have you got the horse now?—No, he is in Connemara. I sold him to Mr. Berridge, a large proprietor there.

8880. Have there been any other thoroughbred stallions down there except these two?—"Golddigger" and "Watchspring" are the only thoroughbred stallions I know of.

8881. Are there any other sort of stallions down there?—No others, except the horses of the Congested Districts Board.

8882. No mongrel stallions?—Oh! there are; but none that I think of any use in the world.

8883. What sort are they?—Mongrels of the very worst description. Principally ponies, there is one out at Errismore. In some parts of Connemara they just turn a stallion out loose on the mountain with the mares.

8884. One of their own tribe?—Yes.

8885. And just leave it to chance?—Yes; there is a man in Carna does that largely. He has a lot of mares, that is Martin Mongan of Carna. I think he sends now to the Congested Districts horse. He had a large number of foals in the last fair of Clifden; he would have sold them for £3 a piece, but he could not get that and he brought them home.

8886. Is the habit there to round them up like a flock of sheep and collect the young animals and send them away?—Yes. They used to go away in droves, but we have got a railway now and they go away in waggons.

8887. Do people come down to buy them?—Yes; there was a large number of small jobbers—gypsies—the small class of buyers there, and there was great demand for the ponies at low prices.

8888. Were there any of the foals of the Congested District Board horses sold there?—They were mixed up with the other foals. They don't seem to make any difference in the price from the others.

8889. What price do they range at?—From about 50*s.* up to £3. £3 was a good price this year for the ordinary foal. Lots of them went at £2. I saw them selling at Clonbur; Mr. Joyce bought foals at £2 a piece.

8890. Do the horse breeders appreciate the Hackney stallions down there?—I really could not say. I think they appreciate anything they get for five shillings or under it. I don't think they are judges really down there—most of them.

8891. You think the price has more to do with them than anything else?—Much more. You could not get a ten shillings fee for a horse now if you had "Kendal" down there.

8892. Do you think that horse-breeding can be made to pay down there?—I think you can certainly make breeding for polo ponies pay; that would be certain to pay I think.

8893. You think by that some money would go into the district?—Yes, I had one myself by "Golddigger," a four-year-old. He ran on a mountain and I only had him in six months and I got £35 for him at the last Hollymount show. That paid me very well. He was on a rough mountain that was not worth a half-a-crown an acre.

8894. Do you think the Hackney stallion is likely to produce that class of animal down there?—Not a polo pony.

8895. You think not?—I don't think it, my lord; but I am quite sure of it. He may produce a trapper; but he won't produce a polo pony, as far as my experience goes.

8896. What sort of stallion do you think now would be the best to have down there?—A small thoroughbred—he may be even up to 15 hands—with plenty of bone. "Watchspring" was a beautiful horse; but it is not easy to get a horse like him. He was 14.3; he was beautifully bred, by "Springfield." You could not beat him. If you could not get a thoroughbred with enough bone I would not object to a slight stain; but I would sooner have a thoroughbred.

8897. Have you any suggestions to make to the Commission with a view to improve the breed of horses in your district? Certainly; to send down a thoroughbred stallion.

8898. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—Do you think that these Connemara ponies are able to be resuscitated—for the breed has gone down a good deal?—Oh, yes. I think they can.

8899. The Chairman.—Did I understand you to say the ponies have deteriorated or not?—We have often heard a great deal about the Connemara pony; but I have been in Connemara for the last forty years and there are some very good mares in it; and, of course, there are a lot of very bad ones. The general impression is that they deteriorated: but you can pick some very good mares in it now with good bone.

8900. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—I think you said they deteriorated. In your opinion the best way to keep the breed up to its greatest excellence would be to use these small thoroughbreds, such as you describe "Watchspring" to be?—Yes.

8901. Should you object to an Arab or a Barb cross?—The Barb that was down in Connemara that the Board had—"Awfully Jolly"—was, I think, a very good horse, indeed; but not big enough for the district.

8901A. What size was he?—"Awfully Jolly" was about 14 hands.

8902. If you could have a larger one of the same class?—Yes, I would not object. From what I hear; I have no experience of breeding from the Barb my self. I have from the other.

8903. "Watchspring" is not there now?—Yes, at Ballynahinch Castle. Mr. Berridge has him; but I don't know whether he means to give him at a fee that can be reached by the small men, because he has a good many mares himself. I don't know what his intention is.

8904. But you think the introduction of Hackney blood among the ponies would be a mistake?—I think it is a mistake even if it produce a small trapper—there are so few of these wanting now.

8905. Are there Hackney stallions in that district?—Yes, and Welsh cobs. Welsh cobs and Hackney stallions are at different places through the district.

8906. And is your opinion of the Hackney the opinion generally among your neighbours who are calculated to give an opinion on horse-breeding?—I could not say that. I am sorry to say that in Connemara I think they know very little about horse-breeding.

8907. Was it at the request of the people in the district that Hackney stallions were sent down there?—I could not tell you that.

8908. Have you any experience in Hackneys yourself?—Yes; I had a pure-bred Connemara mare before the Board introduced Hackneys into Connemara. I sent her to a thoroughbred Hackney, and the result was plenty of bone; but the action didn't seem to have been transmitted, and the mare had very good action. I could make nothing of it, and I sold it as a four-year-old for £14. Well, I sent the mare again to another thoroughbred Hackney, and the result was very much the same thing. Then I sent the same mare to a thoroughbred horse called "Portacarron," and I got ninety sovereigns for it; it was only a cob. That was at the first Hollymount show. Mr. Steeds gave me ninety sovereigns for the result.

8909. What was "Portacarron"?—By "Solon"; a thoroughbred horse.

8910. Mr. La Touche.—Your statement that the prices of foals have gone down in your district does not agree with evidence we have heard before—that the effect of introducing Hackney horses into the congested districts has been to increase the price of foals?—I did not mean the introduction of the Hackneys decreased the price. I am quite free to admit that they were better than what was in it. But the Hackney foals didn't go a bit better than the ordinary foals of the country. I think it is the times that have brought the prices of foals down all around.

8911. I didn't attribute the effect to any particular cause. I merely stated that we have heard in evidence that the introduction of the Hackney horses had greatly appreciated the value of the foals, and you say the foals got by the Congested Districts Board's horses are not worth more than the ordinary foal of the country, and that the ordinary foal of the country has deteriorated in value?—Yes.

8912. And you don't agree with the gentleman who told us that the prices have very much appreciated?—I don't. I never saw foals as low as they are this year.

8913. I fancy the evidence we had before us must have had reference to last year. You remember, my lord, at one of the early sittings a gentleman—I think it was the Secretary of the Congested Districts Board—gave evidence or read documents to the effect that the prices had increased from £2 to £4 a head in some cases, and considerably more than that in other cases?—A herd of mine sold a very nice Hackney foal at the fair of Clifden on the 17th December last, and I think the price was £2 5*s*.

8914. You spoke of a man from Carna who had a number of mares?—Yes, Martin Mongan. He is a cess collector, and he keeps a hotel and a shop; he is a large man of the district.

8915. He used to run stallions with his own mares, but now he utilises the horses of the Congested Districts Board?—I think he does; I think he sends to Cashel, about nine miles away.

8916. He is not a typical peasant?—No

8917. He is not a man in absolute want?—No.

8918. He is not a man that the Government require to assist?—He might have to pay extra. I don't think he would get the stallion at 5*s*. I don't think he is that class of man; he is above that, he has sent to me to "Watchspring" once or twice, I fancy, with the view of getting a stallion for himself.

8919. But the fact of the horse being there enabled him to take advantage of it to the disadvantage of any other horses that might be there, and standing at a higher fee I suppose. Have you lived most of your life in Connemara?—Yes, I might say all my life; since I was five years old.

8920. Have you always taken an interest in horse-breeding?—Yes.

8921. Did you own stallions for some time?—Yes, I owned three altogether during my life.

8922. In reply to Mr. Fitzwilliam, you said you didn't know whether it was at the wish of the inhabitants of the district that Hackney horses had been sent down there?—No, I don't.

8923. But were you yourself personally consulted?—I don't remember that I was asked. I remember meeting Mr. Wrench and Mr. Burdett-Coutts. I forget whether I was asked anything on the subject or not.

8924. If you had been consulted at that time would you have recommended the introduction of this particular breed of horses?—I remember well recommending "Golddigger," but he was my own property at the time.

8925. You live in the neighbourhood of Roundstone. This is the answer I refer to:—Answer to question 189—Mr. Hughes, of Cashel, near Roundstone, County Galway, says:—"In 1893 the Board's young horses fetched from £4 to £7 10*s*. for foals, and foals by country bred stallions from £3 to £5. In later years the prices were from £3 to £5 for foals from the Board's stallions, and the foals of the ordinary country stallions fetched about the same prices." They seem to agree rather that in the county Galway the prices increased very slowly. Mr. Lowndes, of Clifden, says from £2 15*s*. to £4. The only evidence from this part of Galway is in 1893 the foals of the Board's horses were worth from £2 to £2 10*s*. more than the foals got by the ordinary horses, but that in later years the prices seem to have assimilated?—Yes, I think there is a great deal of truth in that. I think they thought more of the Board's foals at first. In 1893, it is just what I said, foals were higher than they are now. I know the jobbers that were buying lately didn't care what it was by, whether by the Congested Districts Board's horses or not.

8926. At any rate there is no sensible increase in the value of those foals, whatever they are got by?—No; I would say not. About two years ago I bought a "Sunbeam" foal in Clifden. I think it was the highest priced foal in Clifden, and it was certainly the best foal there. I paid £4 10*s*. for him, and I have him still. "Sunbeam" was a Welsh cob, and I think the best of all the horses that went down there.

8927. What value is it now?—The foal? I really don't know, it is so hard to place them. There is so little driving now, between bicycles and everything else. If you could meet a man that wanted a trapper you might get £12. What I maintain is that you can't get the same for a horse of that description that you can for one that is by a thoroughbred horse that you can turn into a polo pony. I have any amount of fellows writing to me about polo ponies, and if you are too high for the polo pony you make him a trapper. I am driving a cob now by "Golddigger" that was too high for polo. He is about 14.2½, and you could not ask a better trapper in double or single harness. I don't think any Hackney could go with him.

8928. Mr. Wrench.—Do you think there is any special breed of ponies in Connemara?—I think not.

8929. You think they are small horses dwarfed by the condition of the country or climate?—Long ago there is no doubt, Martin, of Ballinahinch, brought in some good horses, and the result has been going on. They said they were very good in these old days, but if you get a right good Connemara pony now they are badly made about the neck, and they are also rather bad over the tail.

8930. But can you distinguish any particular breed that you can say is the Connemara pony?—No; I don't think I could.

8931. And you, from the position of your father, ought to know as much about them as anybody?—I think I do.

8932. You say that at Clonbur they sold for £2?—Yes; Joyce, of the hotel, told me he was buying them for £2 a piece.

8933. There is no Hackney stallion there?—Only for one year, I think.

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Mr. H. A. Robinson.

8934. A very short time?—I didn't say the foals were by the Hackney.

8935. Do you find that people would send to a thoroughbred?—I think they would if they thought they could breed polo ponies.

8936. Did you get a fair number of mares to "Watchspring"?—I did; about forty each year.

8937. You charged £1, I think?—It was 10*s.* under £20 valuation; £1 over that.

8938. Do you know that most of the horses that have been sent into Connemara by the Board have been Welsh?—Yes; I know "Sunbeam" is Welsh, that stood at Letterfrack, and "Prince Llewellyn" stood at Oughterard and also at Arran.

8939. And at Carraroe?—And a little horse called "Movement" stood at Carraroe. I am not sure what he was.

8940. I mean there have been more Welsh than anything else stood in that district?—Welsh and Hackneys. There was a Hackney at Cashel. "Zeus," I think, was a Hackney.

8941. Was not his stock good?—I wish them joy of "Zeus." The best, I think, I saw there was a big chestnut horse, "Vedette"—something "Vedette"—the year before last. He was the biggest of them.

8942. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything further you wish to say?—The only suggestion I wish to make is that I would be most anxious to get a thoroughbred horse—I don't mean a weedy thoroughbred—into Connemara, because no private individual can bring one in. He cannot compete with the Board's horses at 5*s.* as the price of his fee, otherwise I would try and get a horse myself, but I could not afford to keep him and compete with that price. If the Board would send us one or two thoroughbred horses I think it would be a very good thing indeed.

Adjourned.

Jan. 6, 1897.

SEVENTEENTH DAY.—WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6TH, 1897.

Present:—RIGHT HON. EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, LORD RATHDONNELL, COL. ST. QUINTIN, MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE, MR. F. S. WRENCH.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. George L. Tottenham.

Mr. GEORGE L. TOTTENHAM, Glenade, County Leitrim, examined.

8943. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Tottenham, you live in the County Leitrim, do you not?—Yes.

8944. You are a deputy lieutenant and magistrate of that county?—Yes.

8945. Are you a member of the Horse Breeding Association?—Yes, I am a member of it; I was one of the original members.

8946. Have you any experience personally in breeding horses?—No, I am not interested personally in horse-breeding; the reason I am on the Committee of the Horse Breeding Association is that we have a common ground of interest—the people who principally started that and I—in putting a stop, if possible, to the action of the Congested Districts Board and their horse-breeding schemes.

8947. Do you object to their horse-breeding scheme?—I object to their horse-breeding scheme on other grounds, because I say it is a misapplication of the money of which they are trustees.

8948. That is a question that scarcely affects us?—Well, I suppose in this way it would affect the Commission, that I say there is practically no horse-breeding in those districts at all.

8949. I see, but the question of the application of the money entrusted to them is not one that comes into our purview at all. As far as horse-breeding is concerned, are you acquainted with the congested districts in the County Leitrim?—Yes; I am acquainted not only with the County Leitrim but all the west of the congested districts.

8950. Well, and what have you got to say as to the question of horse-breeding in the districts you are acquainted with?—Well, I have a good deal to say in one way or another.

8951. I should like to get what you want to put before us in your own way?—I am really here as the representative of the Horse Breeding Association, and to advocate their view, which is to have a stop put to this importation of inferior Hackney blood; and also to show that if any State assistance is given to horse-breeding at all in Ireland, it should be to the particular blood that does good to every other breed and does harm to none, and that is, of course, the thoroughbred blood. There are two public bodies spending what is supposed to be public money on horse-breeding in Ireland; it is a mistake to suppose, as a great many people do, that the Congested Districts Board's money is public money, except as to a very small proportion of it, which I propose to show presently. The Royal Dublin Society's money is, of course, public money, for it is a distinct grant of £5,000 a year, under the Local Taxation Act, which has been going on for the last six or seven years. And of those two public bodies, it seems to me one is doing as much harm as the other—the Royal Dublin Society encouraging second-rate thoroughbred horses, and the Congested Districts Board scattering cheap Hackneys about the country.

8952. You don't approve of the system of the Royal Dublin Society?—No; I don't at all, and I think they make a great mistake in thinking that the country approves of it.

8953. Well, but let us have your own reasons for disapproving of it?—The money is simply being pitched away, I think. In the first place, I object to second-rate stallions being registered and subsidised. I think they should have spent their money in buying five or six good horses every year, and planting them out through the country, in the same way that, I think, the Horse Breeding Commission in England does—they get a certain grant every year, which they expend on what they call premium stallions, and plant them out through the country; instead of that the Royal Dublin Society—their first scheme was to subsidise, to pay £2, I think, for each service by every stallion that they registered, and their standard is such a low one—necessarily must be—because the farmers cannot afford to pay for good stallions, that anybody who buys a stallion and gives £100 or £150 for him gets a certificate of soundness, and once he is in Wetherby's Stud Book practically they are all registered—half of them are not fit to breed from.

8954. But they have to be sound, have they not?—Yes.

8955. And they are inferior?—Yes; you hear the same complaint all over the country that what is wanted is a good strong horse, they don't always say a thoroughbred, but what they want is a good strong horse, that is what the farmers ask for; in many districts they like a thoroughbred horse, but what they don't want is those leggy animals.

8956. I understand you object to the Royal Dublin

Society registering horses which ought not to be registered?—I think they ought to have spent their money in another way; if they register thoroughbred horses they must take the best they can get.

8957. What do you propose they should do?—Buy four or five every year for a good price like the English Commission, and plant them out through the country.

8958. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think that is exactly what is being done in England?—I fancy it is; at all events that is what I would suggest here. At present through the country there are what they call Government horses, people don't know what the Dublin Society is at all through the provinces. The Royal Dublin Society is really a Leinster Society, the Registration Committee are all Leinster men, and the other provinces, Ulster, Connaught, and Munster, really have very little to say in their proceedings at all, and the fact is that the people who manage the Dublin Society don't know much about the other provinces; they don't know what we want, their horses all round the country are known as the Government horses.

8959. CHAIRMAN.—What, the Dublin Society's registered horses?—Yes, they are known as the Government horses, and the people at first seemed to think that they were something superior, but they found it is not so at all.

8960. As I said before, you object to the Dublin Society because they register stallions which are not good enough?—I take it for granted that we are going to have an Agricultural Board next year, and I presume that Board will want to have something to do.

8961. That is rather problematical, is it not?—We are told we are going to have it.

8962. Our object is not to take evidence as to what the Agricultural Board is to do when it is formed?—No, except, suppose the Royal Dublin Society chooses to do what I suppose the Board would do, to have some representation of the other provinces, instead of the bad Government horses which are scattered through the country we might have money spent on good ones. If the money which we have had spent during the last seven or eight years had been spent as I say in buying good horses, every county now would have a good horse instead of 234 bad ones.

8963. You think the Dublin Society ought to buy horses themselves, and allocate them about the country?—Yes, they do that to a certain extent.

8964. You think they ought to do it to a larger extent?—I think their money would be much better spent if they did it that way. Perhaps I may read a letter from the Chairman of the Committee of my county on that subject, the Committee that manages the Royal Dublin Society's horse scheme.

8965. In Leitrim?—In Leitrim. He says:—"My view of the Royal Dublin Society's horse-breeding scheme as far as Leitrim is concerned is that it is a sheer waste of money, we have neither horses nor mares to breed from and are prevented from recommending the only decent mares, namely the shopkeepers', who occasionally have a good mare for the cart, and the Sunday car, by the existing rules." The existing rules are simply giving very small prizes, which it is not worth their while to go in for, for mares stinted to a registered stallion. I know two or three cases not only in Leitrim, but in Tyrone and other counties, where people have specially bought a thoroughbred horse, or did under the old scheme of the Dublin Society, where £2 was paid by the Society for each service to nominated mares. People used to bring their mares to what was supposed to be a good Government horse, but since that was changed in 1894 they have got no mares at all, they have sold their horses, because they say the people now go to a common horse for 10*s.*; and then those shows where £2 or £3 are given for mares do not make it worth their while to pay £2 on the chance of getting a £2 or £3 prize for their mares. And in Donegal the scheme has fallen through altogether, the Secretary there, Captain Knox, took a great deal of trouble about it, and he has given it up now altogether. The Leitrim Chairman goes on to say:—"We recommend going back to the first plan of giving nominations." The merit of that plan was not so much in giving nominations, it was in subsidising stallions; the mares, I think, had only to be approved, but when a stallion was subsidised he got £2, he was supposed to serve at £3, and the Royal Dublin Society paid £2 out of the £3. He probably never got the third pound at all, at all events he was sure of £2 and the mares were practically served for nothing, and it was worth a man's while to buy a moderate stallion, at all events very few could afford to buy a good one, but it was better than the present system. He recommends going back to the former system. What he says is "we found the people would not pay the two guineas fee, as you say, on the chance of a £2 prize." I consider the whole scheme wrong, and he recommends the Hungarian and Austrialian scheme, which I don't agree with. "It would be better to give a good lump sum down for an improved scheme than go on year after year spending thousands uselessly." In Fermanagh this year they got a special dispensation to give substantial prizes for mares.

8966. Are you saying this yourself or quoting somebody?—No, I know it of my own knowledge, they had great trouble in getting that dispensation from the Dublin Society, but it worked much better, I have here the number of mares shown in Leitrim, there were two only at Carrick-on-Shannon—this is the return from the Secretary.

8967. Secretary of what?—Of the Leitrim committee of the Royal Dublin Society's horse-breeding scheme. Only £36 out of the £60 that was allotted was given in prizes, and the committee objected, as I think I said before, that they have to give prizes to mares that are really not worth giving prizes to.

8968. You say the committee object to that?—Yes.

8969. Who says they object to that?—I say it of my own knowledge from what the Chairman has told me.

8970. You can scarcely speak authoritatively for the committee?—He says "we have neither horses nor mares to breed from."

8971. This is all secondhand evidence, it would be much better to give us your own opinion about it?—I think my opinion is not of so much value. I have not so much experience in horses as the people whose written evidence I have.

8972. I have no objection to your reading anything, but if you say the committee thought so and so, it is a different matter?—I am not a member of the committee myself.

8973. Quite so, and I don't see what authority you have to speak for the committee?—Except from the Chairman.

8974. Well, you can quote from the Chairman what he says in his letter?—Well; but I know from conversation with him.

8975. We can scarcely take that in evidence from you?—This is a written document from the secretary saying there were only two mares presented at Carrick-on-Shannon.

8976. You are quite at liberty to tell us anything you gather from any conversation or your own personal knowledge, but we can scarcely take it from you that the Secretary of the committee thought so and so?—It was from what I gathered in conversation I was giving my last evidence. Then I can give it as my own knowledge of what they do object to. In the same way I know that there is considerable objection to sending back this money to the Royal Dublin Society. Supposing there is £60 or £100 allotted to each county, and they only spend £30 or £40, they have to send back the balance, instead of being allowed to accumulate it to buy a good horse for that county It is all put into a common fund for the Royal Dublin Society, and a horse is bought and sent down to Clonmel for instance, where a horse is not wanted.

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8977. That is where you think a horse is not wanted?—Well, Clonmel is in the centre of a horse-breeding country where all the best horses are, and surely they don't want a stallion there. The grievance is that the money sent back from each county is not allowed to accumulate for each county to buy a good horse.

8978. I should gather from what you say that you think there should be more local authority in the Dublin Society's scheme, the local committees should have a voice?—I certainly say that the other provinces, Ulster Munster, and Connaught should have more representation on the registration committee, for instance the registration committee is entirely composed of Leinster men. I think these are all Leinster men:—Major Borrowes, Major Everard, Lord Langford, Joseph O'Reilly, Lord Rathdonnell, S. U. Roberts, and Frederick Wrench. I have heard the objection made, in Ulster particularly, that the Royal Dublin Society is a Dublin society and managed by Dublin men and Leinster men. I don't know whether it is relevant to the present inquiry, but I have another objection to make to their expenditure on the horse-breeding, that there is only £5,000 to be expended altogether on horses and cattle, and the cattle-breeding industry being so much the larger industry of the two, instead of spending £3,500 on horses and £1,500 on cattle——

8979. We have nothing to do with cattle, but you think they spend too much on horses?—They spend too much on horses in proportion.

8980. Then we may take it that as far as the Dublin Society goes you think they spend too large a proportion of their grant on horses, and that they don't spend it in the best way?—No, I think the money is practically thrown away

8981. Now as to the Congested Districts' Board?—I have a good deal to say about the Congested Districts' Board, but, perhaps, before leaving the Royal Dublin Society, if any member of the Commission wants to criticise what I have said?

8982. I will give the members of the Commission an opportunity to ask any questions they want?—There was another point about registering by the Royal Dublin Society. There is a great deal of talk about registering, I don't myself see what the advantage of all this registering is; the Royal Dublin Society is publishing a register of all these stallions that they have had on their books for the last six or seven years which are already in Weatherby's stud book, and the register which they are preparing and publishing is simply a register of certificates of soundness, and they attach great importance to that. Perhaps I should have mentioned that I don't associate myself with all that was stated by the Committee of the Horse-breeding Association in their reply to the Secretary of this Commission. I was not there when the reply was drafted, it was rather a crude production, and I should scarcely agree with anything that was stated in it, particularly as to the importance of registration by the Royal Dublin Society.

8983. You don't think that registration is important?—I don't see what the use of it is myself.

8984. Have you anything further to say about the Royal Dublin Society?—No, I think not.

8985. The only other body that I think you object to is the Congested Districts Board?—Yes. The first thing I have to say about the Congested Districts Board is that we have had no report or information; the public has had no information of what they have been doing, or how they have been spending their money since the 31st March, 1895, and under the Act which appointed them they are bound to report annually.

8986. To whom?—To Parliament. In the 41st sec. of the Act it is provided "The Congested Districts Board shall, once in every year after the year 1891, make a report to the Lord Lieutenant of their proceedings under this Act, and every such report shall be presented to Parliament." Well, I wrote at the end of November to the Chief Secretary, as Chairman of the Board, to ask him if he could kindly say when we should have any information later than the 31st March, 1895, and he replied, or his secretary replied, that the last annual report of the Congested Districts Board was almost in type, and that it was pretty certain to be issued to the public during the next month—this was on the 27th November—well, this is the 6th of January, and still we have no report.

8987. Do you know when the reports ought to be issued?—Up to the 31st March of each year, and within the year after that. The last report was seven months late. They report to the 31st of March of each year, and the report to the 31st March, 1895, was not sent to the Lord Lieutenant until 21st October, 1895. Now there is a report due to the 31st March, 1896, and this is the 6th January, 1897, three months over the time within which, according to the Act of Parliament, the report should have been issued.

8988. It should have been issued within the year, therefore it would be some few days after the time?—No, the last report was the 26th October, 1895.

8989. I see; it should have been presented before that date in October, 1896, what do you deduce from that?—It places me at a disadvantage dealing with their figures, because in any calculations I make I am obliged to go by a report which is nearly two years old.

8990. Quite so?—I am also placed at a disadvantage in making any remarks I have to make, because I look upon the Congested Districts Board as being in the dock in this inquiry, and the member who is principally incriminated, perhaps, is a member of this Commission, so I am not in a position, perhaps, to make all the agreeable remarks I might otherwise have liked to.

8991. I think you may look upon all the members of this Commission as being perfectly impersonal?—I shall be as agreeable as I can, but it is, perhaps, unfortunate.

8992. As far as the Commission is concerned you must understand that we do not at all agree with you that the Congested Districts Board is in the dock. We have to deal with the horse-breeding of the whole country, and we have to deal with the Congested Districts Board only as far as it is concerned with horse-breeding?—I think the origin of the Commission was an application by Captain M'Calmont, in the House of Commons, to have a committee appointed early in the year, in March; that was refused at the time, and afterwards a deputation went to the Lord Lieutenant upon the subject principally of what the Congested Districts Board had done in the introduction of that particular strain of blood, and then this Commission, I think, was granted as a sort of after-thought to inquire into that question.

8993. I beg your pardon, our reference does not authorise us to inquire particularly into anybody or anything, but into the horse-breeding; in what you have to say about the Congested Districts Board, you should confine yourself to what they have to do with horse-breeding?—It is of course on the methods that should be adopted in the encouragement and improvement of the breeding of horses.

8994. We have nothing to do with whether they send in their reports in time, except in so far as they may inconvenience you in any deduction you may make as to the breeding of horses?—I quite understand that. I was going to read a portion of Lord Cadogan's reply to the deputation which waited upon him, in which he informed them that this Commission would be appointed, merely to show that the origin of it was the action of the Congested Districts Board.

8995. I don't think that that is necessary, we all know that the Congested Districts Board is engaged in horse-

breeding, and if you have anything to say on that part of the subject, we shall be glad to have it?—Perhaps some of the Commission have never been in these congested districts, and perhaps I might read a description of them.

8996. Do you mean the congested districts generally?—Yes.

8997. I don't think it is quite evidence?—So as to show the nature of the country in which this particular kind of horse is being let loose.

8998. You can tell us anything you like about the nature of the country, and the class of horses there is in it?—I think it would come with more authority if I just read a few paragraphs from an article in the "Fortnightly Review," written by Mr. T. W. Russell, describing it. This article was written in 1890.

8999. I have no objection to your reading it, but I don't see what it has to do with our inquiry?—I am sure many of the Commission have never been in these districts, and don't understand the people that these horses have been provided for.

9000. What we want to know is the kind of mares that these horses are provided for?—Yes, but it is the kind of people who keep the mares that the Congested Districts Board is providing for; the people who have those mares, it is only very short, the Conservative Government was in at the time, and one of the usual Conservative Land Bills was in the air.

9001. I think it is rather inconvenient your quoting this article, it would be much better if you told us what you know yourself. You say you know these congested districts well, can you not tell us what you know, say about their geographical position, for the members of the Commission cannot cross-examine Mr. T. W. Russell?—Can I read the Board's description of them in their own report?

9002. It would be much better if you gave us your own description?—I could not put it nearly so well as the Board itself, so graphically.

9003. What we want to gather is your own opinion?—I want to put it as vividly and graphically as possible.

9004. We would sooner have it in your own words?—The people of the congested area that the Board was appointed to deal with—they are crowded areas with a swarming population, few or any of whom are in a position to keep a mare at all. For instance, the late Lord George Hill's property about Gweedore is one of the principal congested districts. There are 936 tenants there at an average rent of 18*s.* a piece, that is what is really a congested area and a congested population. And those wretched people who, very few of them, for instance, can keep a horse of any kind, are supposed to be braced and cheered by having a high class carriage stallion placed within their reach. That is the point that I wanted to show. Of course, they are not farmers at all, it is only a bit of accommodation land they have. Most of them live by what their sons and daughters earn in service, principally in Derry, Scotland or America. They come home with a few shillings and pay the rents in that kind of way. There is no question about their being farmers at all. They have a patch of mountain land, potato ground, and a patch of turf, and that is the style of thing all down Donegal, and Mayo, and Connemara, and Kerry, too, and all through these districts.

9005. Of course the congested districts extend practically over the whole west of Ireland, so, I suppose, they vary a good deal in the circumstances and the condition of the people, do they not?—A congested district under the Act was supposed to be where 20 per cent. of the population of the county are under 30*s.* valuation.

9006. Well, we need not mind what constitutes a congested district; but as a matter of fact portions of Ireland from north to south are in congested districts, are they not?—Yes; the portions are shown there (referring to map).

9007. So there must be some variation in the condition of the people and the geographical condition of these congested districts. You can scarcely speak of them in one lump?—Some parts are very much more congested than others. The south coast of Galway for instance, and the west coast of Donegal and Mayo. The population there are very much closer together than they are in the inland sections. But the people are just as poor, in fact they are rather poorer in the inland sections than along the coast.

9008. Then do you mean as far as the horses are concerned the people of these districts are not capable of breeding horses at all?—Quite so. It is only in one or two spots about the coast of Donegal and Connemara, and, perhaps Achill, where they keep ponies at all. In Leitrim, for instance, it is all donkeys they keep, and it is donkeys they ought to keep. They keep them for half the feeding, and all they want them for is for bringing home turf. They feed them on rotten potatoes in their houses in winter and turn them out on to the bare rocky mountain in the summer, and those are the people these high-class stallions are supposed to benefit.

9009. Are we to take it from you that it is a waste of money to encourage people breeding horses at all in these districts?—Entirely, the money should be employed in other ways.

9010. Then there would be no use in asking you questions as to what would be the best way to encourage horse-breeding in those districts because you think it ought not to be encouraged at all?—Certainly not. Over two-thirds of Ireland there is no such thing as horse-breeding.

9011. Then you think encouragement ought not to be given to people to breed horses?—Certainly not, except in one or two spots, like the west coast of Donegal where it is a matter of pride with the people to keep a pony instead of a donkey. A cob stallion of some kind might be provided there.

9012. But as a general rule you think it is a waste of money to encourage them to breed horses?—Quite; to me it is simply grotesque to say that because there is a demand for high-class carriage horses in England, high-class Hackneys should be sent to such districts.

9013. You don't think those districts are capable of producing a horse that would sell?—I am quite sure it is absolutely impossible.

9014. Then we may take it that as far as the Congested Districts Board is concerned you think the expenditure of any public money on the encouragement of horse-breeding is a waste and useless?—Quite so; but I should like to show from these returns what money has been actually spent.

CHAIRMAN.—I don't think that is necessary for us, and we have got that report already.

9015. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you said that the Royal Dublin Society in your opinion, so far as the horse-breeding part of it is concerned, is constituted of people living solely in Leinster?—Yes.

9016. Are there not local committees—I think you referred to your own—in the different counties of Ireland, whose business it is to report on their own several districts?—Yes.

9017. And to aid the Society in drawing up their schemes?—Yes.

9018. Do your own local committee in Leitrim report?—I don't know how they report, whether they send in recommendations every year, do they?

9019. They do. The reason I ask you the question is because you suggested that there was no report from any local district to the Society, so I gathered from your evidence?—I don't know how they report, and whether the Royal Dublin Society's scheme is founded on such reports.

9020. You don't know whether it is or not?—No, I don't know. As far as my own county is concerned the scheme in practice there is not what they recommended or approve. I don't know what they have reported or suggested in previous years.

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9021. You don't know that the local committees can choose whether they will work the old scheme through the stallion or the later one through the mare?—I don't think they understand that they can do that.

9022. You referred to the money returned from the different counties, do you know what becomes of that money?—Yes, I understand that goes into a common fund and that horses are bought with it.

9023. Is not that what you recommend, is it your idea that the best way of improving the breed of horses is the purchase of stallions?—Yes.

9024. And you don't object to the money being spent in that way?—Only in this way that it is rather hard on the county to send back money every year and not to get it back again in the shape of a stallion.

9025. Do you know what would happen if the money was not expended at the end of the financial year?—I know if it is not expended it would go back to the Treasury.

9026. I also understand you to say that you would prefer not to have any registration of stalliions whatever?—I don't see the use of it except as a certificate of soundness.

9027. That is nothing in your eye, you don't care about the soundness of the stallion?—It is desirable, but most of the stallions serving through the country put at the bottom of their bills the veterinary surgeon's certificate.

9028. You would not have any examination of them whatsoever by any person sent down by the Royal Dublin Society to see whether the horse was a fit horse to serve mares?—Any ordinary stallion or thoroughbred stallion; you mean the stallions generally in the district?

9029. Any thoroughbred stallion?—Well, if he had a certificate from a competent veterinary surgeon of the district I don't see why that should not be as good.

9030. You would not have him inspected to see if he was likely to improve the breed of horses?—Yes, I would, certainly; but then I think the standard is so low at present that the inspection is not of much use

9031. Are you aware that any horses were rejected from registration?—Yes, I believe there were some, but I am not aware whether it was on the ground that they were unsuitable or unsound.

9032. In fact you are not aware of how the matter of registration works at all?—Yes, I suppose I know all about it and how it is done. I know that the Inspector goes down from the Royal Dublin Society and reports on the horse, and there is a veterinary surgeon's certificate given when a man applies to have his horse registered.

9033. And you would do away with that, you say it is no use?—I don't see that it prevents an inferior horse, an indifferent horse from serving through the country.

9034. You have not heard then of any horses having been put on one side on account of unsuitability?—No.

9035 Or on account of their produce not turning out well?—No; I know there were 264 applications this year and only 234 were registered.

9036. You are speaking of a subject that you are not thoroughly acquainted with I fancy?—Yes, as far as the details of the working, I suppose I am.

9037. Are there many horses bred in your country?—About Manorhamilton there are. There was a thoroughbred stallion there the year before last under the old scheme.

9038. That was when the stallion was subsidised?—Yes, and then when the subsidy was taken away the owner sold him. He got very few mares, and it was not worth his while to keep him.

9039. Mr. WRENCH.—I think, Mr. Tottenham, you are one of the gentlemen who recommended goats instead of horses for the congested districts?—Yes, I think the money would be much better spent in that way or in getting calves.

9040. And I think you said there was no horse-breeding in the district at all?—No, I don't say there is no horse-breeding in the district at all, because in all these districts there are green spots here and there where the larger farmers do breed horses, and where there are brood mares kept.

9041. You have referred to Gweedore, do you know in what Union Gweedore is?—Yes, Dunfanaghy.

9042. Do you know as a matter of fact that in Dunfanaghy 66 per cent. of the number of families in that Union keep horses?—No, I do not at all.

9043. That would be news to you?—It would, certainly.

9044. Do you know the Union of Innishowen?—Yes.

9045. How many families do you think keep horses in that district?—I don't know, but that is not nearly so congested as Gweedore.

9046. No, but you say you know all the congested districts, I want to test your knowledge?—I could tell you about Dungloe.

9047. I want to test you first about your knowledge, do you know that in Innishowen 94 per cent. of the number of families keep horses, and do you know that in Milford 98 per cent. of the number of families keep horses there?—But I have no way of checking those figures. You are assuming that those figures are correct.

9048. They are compiled from figures furnished by the Registrar-General. I think you said you knew all the congested districts?—Yes.

9049. Donegal, for instance Do you visit Donegal constantly?—I have been there two or three times.

9050. And you live in Donegal, do you?—No; I live in Leitrim, close to Donegal.

9051. Have you been in Mayo?—Yes.

9052. How often have you been in Mayo?—Two or three times.

9053. Do you know whether you have been two, or three times there?—Yes, I have.

9054. Been three times all through Mayo?—Not all through Mayo.

9055. What part of Mayo have you been three times in?—To the Westport district.

9056. I am speaking of the congested districts of Mayo. Have you been in all the congested districts of Mayo three times?—No; I don't suppose I have.

9057. How often have you been in the congested districts of Galway?—Two or three times, too.

9058. Do you remember how many times exactly?—All through? Well, I have been about Leenane, and all round about there, I suppose, three times.

9059. Have you been in the congested districts of Galway or Mayo before the formation of the Congested Districts Board?—Oh, yes.

9060. Have you been there since the formation of the Board?—Yes.

9061. And in Kerry?—No, but I have been in Cork, about Schull.

9062. You have not been in Kerry?—Not since the formation of the Congested Districts Board; I have been as far as Bantry, all round by Schull Skibbereen and that way; that would be in Cork.

9063. You have not been in Kerry?—No.

9064. CHAIRMAN.—Not since the formation of the Board. You have been before, and know the country?—Oh, yes.

9065. Mr. WRENCH.—You referred particularly to Dungloe. I think your correspondence with the Congested Districts Board has dated back for some time?—No; I have had no correspondence with them for the last two or three years.

9066. Did it not begin in November, 1891, when they were formed?—Yes, quite likely.

9067. And went on in January, 1893. Did it not?—I daresay it did. I cannot say.

9068. After that correspondence did you write a great many letters with reference to the proceedings of the Congested Districts Board?—Yes; I did.

9069. Well, you have referred in one, I think, to Dungloe?—Yes; I don't know that I said anything particularly about Dungloe.

9070. Did you say in a letter that out of a population of 12,000 at Dungloe, who were fortunate enough to be the possessors of some kind of pony mare, there were not more than 30?—Served by the Congested Districts Board's horse.

9071. You did not state that. I am referring to your letter of 14th October, 1896?—Was that a published letter?

9072. Yes?—What did I say?

9073. That out of a population of 12,000 there were 30 who were fortunate enough to be the possessors of some kind of pony mare?—There were 30 mares served by the Board's horses; that I have from the District Inspector.

9074. You did not put it that way?—Would you kindly read the context.

9075. "The Board's money must go in prizes for fat shopkeepers and substantial farmers, who can keep good mares to get good foals, or for keeping a horse at a first cost for purchase of perhaps £300, and at an annual cost for keep of £250 for the 30, for instance this year, out of a population of 12,000 at Dungloe, who are fortunate enough to be possessors of some kind of pony mare?"—Exactly; 30 people only profited by the Board's expenditure there.

9076. Do you know that there are in that district over 500 mares?—No, I do not. The only other stallion, when I was round there I went to see him, I was told he had had twenty-seven mares, that was fifty-seven altogether served in the district this year. I wrote to the Registrar-General to know if there was any return of mares for these districts, because Mr. Micks put in a return of 49,000 horses as being in the congested districts from some returns which he said were not yet published, and I wrote to the Registrar-General to know where I could get those statistics and whether he could give the figures of the number of mares in those districts, which seemed to me the important thing to know, but he said he had no statistics of the kind, and that the numbers Mr. Micks had stated of horses generally in the district and the return had been sent in to the Commission and therefore belonged to the Commission and I could not have it.

9077. But when you say there is no horse-breeding in the district you don't know the number of mares in the district?—I know the number of mares that were served in Dungloe.

9078. You don't know the number of mares in the district?—You can pretty well judge from that.

9079. You think that is a test?—Oh, I think so, certainly.

9080. Do you think most of the mares that were served belonged to what you call fat shopkeepers?—In that district, no, because that is one of the exceptional districts where there are a lot of small ponies kept.

9081. Do you call the Dungloe district an exceptional district?—Yes, in that respect, in respect of there being a number of ponies, but in the districts about me only gentlemen and shopkeepers have profited.

9082. In what Union?—Ballyshannon, and various Unions in Leitrim.

9083. Has there been any horse stationed at Ballyshannon?—No, Donegal.

9084. Not there now?—No.

9085. Taken away?—Because there is another man who has a Suffolk Punch which is preferred.

9086. That is the reason, you know that is the reason that influenced the Board?—I imagine so, I have got a letter from the gentleman, he says the Board's horse has been getting nothing to do.

9087. That is what you imagine?—That is what he says.

9088. CHAIRMAN.—Well, I may take it, Mr. Tottenham, from you, that you think on the whole with the exception of a few favoured spots that there is no use in trying to breed horses in these congested districts?—Yes.

9089. Therefore, as a whole, that the money is wasted?—Nobody there keeps a horse for breeding, not even the largest farmer, he simply takes a foal from his mare just to help her to pay her way, it is a by-product altogether.

9090. You think it is more or less wasting money to spend it in trying to encourage horse-breeding in these districts?—I think it is a monstrous thing that £50,000 should have been spent in that way.

9091. Can you not say yes or no to what I asked you. Do you think it is a waste of money?—Decidedly I do.

9092. But beside that fact, assuming the money is to be spent there, do you think it is spent in the best way, assuming a certain amount of money is to be spent in the congested districts for encouraging horse-breeding, do you think it is spent to the best advantage?—Decidedly not. I object to the kind of horses; the only kind of horse that is suited for that particular part where there are a lot of ponies is some kind of a cob; of course different parts of the congested districts are different. In Innishowen, for instance, they had a cob and a Hackney this year, and they objected to both as being too light; what they have to do there is a certain amount of ploughing, and a good deal of very heavy carting to Derry, twenty miles of a bad road, and they want a larger kind of horse. I believe it was intended to send a thoroughbred up there, a thoroughbred that has been serving at the stud farm at Bray this summer; this would be utterly ridiculous; the people would have nothing to do with him; he would not suit any more than a light Hackney or cob. Then again, along the coast there are other places, for instance, near Lord Leitrim's, at Milford. The old Lord Leitrim used to keep a Suffolk Punch twenty years ago, and the people there say that was the most serviceable horse for the district, and afterwards when the young Lord Leitrim came in (the late Lord), he kept a Clydesdale, and then an Arab and a thoroughbred, and this year they have gone back again to the Suffolk Punch. Close to, within one and a half miles, the Board has had a light Hackney and the mares too light for the Suffolk Punch they used to send to this light Hackney of the Board. There they don't keep ponies in the same kind of way as they do about Dungloe. They are much larger again about Dunfanaghy. It is different too in other places where there is heavy carting to do, for instance from Gweedore or anywhere about there, where they cart from Derry, forty miles, there they want a larger breed of horses, but now there is less want for horses owing to these new light railways. There used to be a lot of carting from Swinford to Ballaghaderreen and also to Clifden; all those horses are now knocked off the road. The small occupiers used to keep a horse merely for carting purposes.

9093. You don't think that the money that is spent by the Congested Districts Board in encouraging the breeding of horses is spent in the best way?—No; I object of course, to the expenditure on horses at all, and also to the way in which it is being expended. The number of foals that they say they have got is about 5,000, and the foals have been selling this year at 50s., and calves have been selling at from £3 to £5, and if the same money had been spent on bulls——

CHAIRMAN.—We have nothing to do with that, does any member of the Commission wish to ask a question.

9094. Mr. WRENCH.—You take then Dungloe as a specimen district for pony breeding?—For ponies being required, yes, Dungloe and Connemara.

9095. That is in the Union of Glenties?—Yes.

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9096. And you say the people at Carndonagh object to a Welsh cob being sent there?—Yes, they thought that and the Hackney too light.

9097. Do you know that there was a petition from the Board of Guardians to send a Welsh cob?—No; but I know there was a petition from the Board of Guardians to send a Suffolk Punch.

9098. You don't know that there was a petition to send a Welsh cob?—No; I think it is very improbable if they asked for a Suffolk Punch.

9099. Are you forming your own opinion as to the best class of horse to send to these districts, or is it from information received?—From what I see and hear, both.

Mr. William Roberts.

Mr. WILLIAM ROBERTS, Bigsdale, Ballinhassig, Cork, examined.

9100. CHAIRMAN.—I think you represent the Cork Agricultural Society?—Yes, sir; I was asked to come here.

9101. Can you tell us when that society was formed and what its objects are?—Well, the society is a very old society; I don't know the exact date it was formed, but it is a very old society. As to its objects, one of them is to encourage horse-breeding in the county, and then we take up cattle and all agricultural purposes.

9102. But among its other objects, one is to encourage the breeding of horses?—Yes, sir, that is its principal object I think.

9103. What means does it take towards that end?—We hold an annual show and we give a good lot of prizes. We give annually about £430 in prizes at our show. Some ten years ago we were giving about £170 annually in prizes, and we increased that, and this year we gave £430. We have different classes for all sorts of horses, but our principal thing is for hunters; we try to encourage the hunter breeding as far as we can.

9104. Could you tell us to what classes you give prizes?—I can. We give, first of all, a prize for thoroughbred stallions. The best thoroughbred stallion in the Stud Book, calculated to get weight-carrying hunters, and they must stand in the province of Munster for the coming year. Then we give a prize for the best gelding or mare, not less than five-year-old, and calculated to carry fifteen stone and upwards.

9105. In the hunter class?—Yes; and then for the best gelding or mare, not less than five-year-old, for the best 13·7 to 15 stone. Light hunter class again, for the same age, from 12 stone to 13·7; we give that at aged horses—£69 in prizes. Then we commence in four-year-olds, and we give, for the best four year-old gelding or filly, to carry thirteen stone and upwards, first prize, £25; we try to encourage that class as well as we can in Cork; in that class we give £33 in prizes. We also give a class for light weight four-year-olds, that is from twelve stone to thirteen stone seven; and we give prizes for three-year-olds, £27 in that class. For hunting purposes all these are. And then for two-year-olds, the same; and we give a prize for yearlings.

9106. Any prize for thoroughbred stock?—I am just coming to that. And then for brood mares we have two classes, one an open class. I will just read the heading we put to it—"For the best brood mare in foal to, or with foal at foot by a thoroughbred horse or a registered hunter sire, which in the opinion of the judges is best calculated to produce high-class weight-carrying hunters." We get a medal from the Hunter Improvement Society of England, and they ask us to put in that the mare might be in foal to a registered hunter sire. We have none of them in Cork, and it does not make much difference then. Then we give, for tenant farmers, prizes under the same heading for brood mares.

9107. What age are the brood mares?—We don't limit them. The only thoroughbred class we give for the produce of thoroughbred stallions is for yearlings, we give a prize for thoroughbred yearlings.

9108. What is the prize for brood mares?—We give £27 for the two classes, £17 and £10, and besides we get a gold medal from the Hunters Improvement Society. This year I believe the Hunters Improvement Society offered silver medals also for classes. Then we give classes for cobs and ponies, and a driving class, and we have a class for agricultural horses but our principal thing is for hunters. This year we had 274 entries for our show, and in that there were 179 entered in the hunting classes, leaving only 95 for all the other classes combined.

9109. How long has your society been in the habit of giving prizes to this value, or something like this value?—We are about five years increased to this much; this year, I am sorry to say, we had frightful weather, and lost all our gate money, and I am afraid we will have to reduce our prizes next year unless something turns up.

9110. What has been the effect, in your opinion, of the efforts of your Society during the last five years?—I act as steward every year of the horse classes, and I find, as far as I am a judge, that the horses are improving, and since we have increased the money the entries have increased likewise, and we have very good sales at our Show. I could give you the entries in each class. In the aged horses we don't have as many entries as in young horses, which shows that the horses are sold out of the country. We have always good entries in light-weight four-year-olds, nearly always our best entries; we had twenty-seven in that class this year.

9111. Is there anything objectionable in that, it amounts to this that the horses are sold?—The hunters are taken out of the country when four or five years old.

9112. Are many horses bred in your country for purely agricultural purposes?—There are. Besides being connected with the County Cork Agricultural Society I am working on the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, on the committee, since the first year it was started. I was inspecting mares at a lot of their shows in Co. Cork, and this year, I must say, and last year, the way the scheme is working is a failure.

9113. Putting aside agricultural horses what do you consider is the most profitable kind of horse to breed?—In the County Cork there are two classes of farmers. But the principal horse we want for the County Cork is the thoroughbred horse, to breed hunters. In some parts of the country there are small farmers that sell their yearlings, and in the local fairs the colts got by cart horses sell better than the hunters. But for the general thing for the improvement of horses there the thoroughbred horse would be required more than anything else.

9114. I don't quite understand you?—For the general run of the country we want to breed from thoroughbred stallions.

9115. Your object would be to breed hunters?—Yes; I am a tenant farmer myself, and breed horses, I have to breed them to make the rent, and I take an interest in them all over the country.

9116. How is your part of the country off for thoroughbred sires?—In some parts of the County Cork we have plenty of horses, but then there is a district from Bandon, along to Clonakilty and West Cork, and the Macroom district, where there are very bad horses. This year, I am glad to say, Sir John Arnott is getting in some stallions for his tenants, but they may be confined to only one district. When the Royal Dublin Society's first scheme came in they located a horse in West Cork, and I think that did more good than all their schemes since; as far as I could see, the farmers took an interest in it and showed their mares.

9117. You say the county is fairly well off as regards stallions, what class of mares do the farmers who try to breed hunters breed from?—At the show of mares, as a rule, they are a bad class, but the people who breed hunters keep good mares, but lately they are not keeping their best mares, they get too much money for them at two and three-year-old and sell them. And I am sorry to say in some parts of the district they are only keeping the refuse that they are not able to sell and breeding from them. If the farmers could be encouraged by prizes or in some way to keep on their good mares a bit.

9118. You give prizes for brood mares with foal at foot in Cork?—We give a prize ourselves for them.

9119. Has that had any effect?—It has, those mares that come to Cork are a very good class, but then they don't catch the farmers outside, far away from Cork.

9120. Have you any idea who buys these three or four-year-old fillies?—There are local dealers in Cork.

9121. Do you know where they go to, what becomes of them?—I think the most of them are sent to England. They are taken out of our district, if there is a good colt in the country there are about 20 men watching him.

9122. Do the farmers about you who breed hunters sell them as two or three-year-olds?—There are a few of them keep them, there are some of them that keep their horses until four or five-year-olds. Then there are some that cannot afford to keep them, and sell them.

9123. Do you think it pays a man better to sell a horse calculated to make a hunter at two-year-old than to keep him to four or five?—I don't mean that it would pay him better, but some cannot afford, their land has not room enough to keep too many colts on.

9124. I think you said that although you gave prizes at your show to the produce of registered hunter sires, that you have had no experience of their produce?—No, sir, we have experience of some of their produce, but there are none of them registered in our county, but there are some good sires that are not registered that are breeding well, of course there are very few, but I think it is dangerous.

9125. There are some half-bred sires?—There are, but they are very few, but the danger is, for one good one they will get just double as many bad ones.

9126. And do you think that the best way of trying to persuade farmers to keep their best mares and breed from them, would be to offer them larger prizes? Some of the good stallions—of course the small farmers cannot send their mares to them, the charges are too much, if they could get their good stallions at a low figure they would give up the bad stallions. There are a dreadful lot of those unsound stallions, and if they were encouraged by prizes to keep good young mares, the majority of the farmers that are breeding hunters would do it; they get no encouragement in fact as yet; the Dublin Society's scheme is no encouragement for a man to take a mare and a foal for the risk of taking her into the city to have her inspected and to get £2, therefore it is a failure.

9127. Do you think the quality is worse than it used to be?—No, I think it is just as good as it used to be. Some parts of our county is neglected altogether for stallions, that is West Cork, first of all the Royal Dublin Society did send a stallion there, and then they changed their scheme. I wrote when I was sending out my report, and said Cork was too large to be worked by one committee, aud the grant was too small, we only got £160 for the county. In answer to that letter I was told sometime after that the county was divided into two districts, East and West Cork, with two grants of £100 for each. Since that West Cork was getting a sum of money, but before that the West Cork farmers did not get any chance of improving their horses. But there are no good stallions in the district up to this.

9128. Have you any suggestion to make as to any improvements the Royal Dublin Society should make in their system or rules?—Well, sir, I don't like to interfere with the Royal Dublin Society, I suppose they try to do their best, but if they allocate stallions in different parts of the country, as they did at first, to find out where they were most wanting—at present we have a lot of registered stallions in one part of the county and very few in the other, if they were allocated at first I think the scheme would work better.

9129. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What do you say about the half-bred stallions, you don't object to a good half-bred stallion if suitable?—I would not object to a half-bred stallion, but we should be very careful how they were breeding before we would take them on and that they were sound, of course they should have three or four crosses of thoroughbred in them.

9130. The groundwork of the blood would be of course thoroughbred?—Yes, sir, and before we would recommend them we should see how they were breeding, because a lot of them might be breeding badly; I think a lot depends on half-bred stallions, and some breed hunters just as well as the best bred horses, but we should be careful how they are breeding.

9131. You would wish them to be well selected, would you register them?—I think it is a good thing to register them, that is if they are passed sound, a great number of them, I am sorry to say are very unsound in the county and they get them for 4*s.* or 5*s.* a mare, in fact take them into the yards of the farmers only to get it.

9132. As to the mares can you suggest any means of keeping them in the country for breeding purposes?—If the farmers get a yearly grant for good mares I am sure it would keep a lot of good mares in the country.

9133. Get a grant?—If they get a premium every year for their mares who are in foal to one of the registered stallions, and keep a good mare to be inspected every year by the committee. At our show in Cork we give a good first prize to brood mares, if we could afford to give eight or nine prizes of equal merit we would have better entries and the farmers would come up, but they know certain good mares will get first and second and we cannot afford to give any more for equally good mares.

9134. Suppose you were able to give ten equal prizes, what sum do you think would induce the ordinary farmer to keep a mare throughout the year?—I think if they got ten equal prizes after a good first prize, £5 to £7 a mare, they would do it; I am sure a good many would be kept for that, that is equal prizes, give a first and second prize or something that way.

9135. A first and second prize of the larger sum and then prizes of equal sums?—I am certain if they got eight or nine prizes of £5 each it would encourage them to come. We give a first prize of £10 for brood mares, £10, £5, and £2 is what we give.

9136. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you happen to have the proportion of fillies and colts exhibited in the two, three, and four-year-old classes?—I don't happen to have them, but I was just going to mention about them, that is what we were always trying to do in Cork, we wanted to have separate classes for fillies and geldings, but we cannot afford it and a lot of people object to show fillies against geldings. And another thing we object to which keeps our show small is horse dealers showing against breeders, because they say the horse-dealers pick Ireland and then show against the breeders and beat them. We give an open class, and there are great objections we found by some farmers to show against dealers.

9137. Do you find the young mares bought up very much in your country?—Any good two or three-year-olds, whether geldings or mares, are picked up; in fact, they go to the houses to pick them up.

9138. Are there mares in the district where you say there are no stallions; I didn't quite make out

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where that was that you referred to?—Bandon and in the West Cork District. Macroom is one place; there are hardly any stallions there.

9139. Are there good mares in that district?—There are some good mares; plenty of mares to breed good hunters in that district and Clonakilty, around the Dunmanway district. There was a stallion located in Dunmanway under the Dublin Society's scheme, that was "York."

9140. How do you account for it that the stallions don't go down there if there are a sufficient number of good mares?—No gentleman there cares for going into stallions, I suppose. There is a good stallion sent there now to Bandon; but he is for the tenants of the district—"Royal Meath." I believe also near Skibbereen Mr. Townshend has got some stallions very lately.

9141. Thoroughbred?—Yes. I think he gave evidence before you.

9142. Mr. WRENCH.—"Controversy," is it not?—He was there. I am not sure has he left it. Mr. Townshend gave evidence before you.

9143. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Are there any half-bred stallions in that part?—Well, you could not call them half-bred. They are bred some way; you don't know what way they are bred. They call them half-bred. The dams may be what you like; they are got by thoroughbred horses. There are none with three or four crosses in that district.

9144. But they are chiefly got by a thoroughbred horse?—There are some of them got by a thoroughbred horse; and then if they have a good-looking colt out of a common mare some of the farmers keep them on.

9145. How is the common mare usually bred?—There is some of the Clydesdale in her, and then got back again to the thoroughbred horse.

9146. Are there any Clydesdale horses or Cleveland there?—There are some Shires and that sort in our district and in some of the districts between Bandon and Skibbereen. They like the Shires there. They sell their colts at the fairs as yearlings, and they sell better than if bred by hunters.

9147. I take it that you think the old scheme of the Dublin Society worked better than the present one—that is, sending the stallions down and subsidizing them?—Yes, sir, it certainly did.

9148. Do you think the present scheme is good also if there was sufficient money to give prizes to mares with an eye to keeping the younger ones in the country?—If the show of mares was held when there would be a good local show going on and give more money it might encourage them; but, as it is now, for the money that is given the farmers don't show the mares. You have the same men year after year exhibiting the same mares. You don't get any strangers.

9149. But if a scheme could be worked, an amalgamation of the two schemes together, you think it would be good?—Yes; if a stallion was sent to the part of the district he was wanted in, and there were Government shows of mares in the other parts of the district; but then the stallion owners should be subsidized to reduce the fee for farmers. They cannot afford to pay for good stallions at the price they are charging.

9150. That would be somewhat in the old form—the mares were sent to the different stallions, and a proportion of the service fee was paid by the Royal Dublin Society?—Yes, and when the owners of the mares paid their share of it down when the mare was passed, because I heard some of the stallion owners saying they never got their share; they got their share from the Dublin Society, but not from the mare owners. I never found it hard to get the money from the farmers at shows.

9151. Did you ever hear of a stallion owner paying something to the owner of the mare to bring her to his stallion?—I have heard of it too, sir. I think if the grant that is given for the county was given more through the Agricultural Society or worked through a committee, I think with such a large society, something between 500 and 600 members, they could allocate it themselves, get their grant from the county direct, not from the Dublin Society.

9152. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Yours is, perhaps, one of the largest districts in the county for breeding riding horses, is it not?—Yes, sir.

9153. And from your country a great many of the horses that go to our Government and other Governments go as troopers?—There are a great many of them sold as troopers.

9154. With regard to any alteration of them, do you think that the introduction of the Hackney is likely to improve or enhance the value of the hunter class, out of which the remounts come?—Well, sir, I am not going to speak of horses I know nothing of. I don't know very much of Hackneys, but from gentlemen breeding horses and owning Hackneys in the county, and hearing them talking of them, I think the Hackney would disimprove the breeding of horses all over the county. This is the general opinion, but I don't know anything about Hackneys.

9155. I only asked you the question because there is another question. With regard to the horse which you say is used a great deal down there, the Shire horse; he gets a weedy class of horses?—Yes, sir. With some of the small mares he breeds a useful sort of van horse, which sells well as young horses at fairs.

9156. You have not seen any of the produce of the Hackney round that country?—There is none of it in our district yet; there might be some in from West Cork, near Bantry, but I did not see them; but I might say the general opinion of farmers and of breeders of horses in the county Cork is against Hackneys, and of course some of them know nothing of them, but the dealers that buy their horses and are in the habit of attending their fairs are always preaching against them, so I think the farmers will not try them if they can help it.

9157. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Your evidence is that if a man wants to sell his colt as a yearling, he is more likely to do so if it is got by a cart-horse or an inferior bred horse, and if he keeps it to three years old it is more valuable if got by a thoroughbred horse?—That is about Bandon, where there are small farmers; they cannot afford to keep their colts more than a year, and the horses got by heavy cart-horses sell better in those fairs than if got by a thoroughbred horse.

9158. Then, in the opinion of the farmers, the foals or yearlings got by a cart-horse fill the eye, and are more presentable animals than foals or yearlings got by a thoroughbred horse?—That is a few of the small farmers, but any farmers that have lands who are able to keep their colts on hardly ever sell their hunter foals at that age; it pays to keep them on.

9159. Of course in these districts west of Bandon, with which I am perfectly acquainted up to Clonakilty, the farmers are, as a rule, poor, with small holdings?—Not exactly between Bandon and Clonakilty. There are some good holdings there, but in the Dunmanway district and round that way where it is a bit more mountainous they are not as well off.

9160. Up all that valley, Innoshannon and the Bandon river, there is good horse-breeding land?—Yes, sir.

9161. Which is at present entirely unserved by any thoroughbred stallion?—Yes; we have none at all in that district.

9162. Since "York" was down there?—"York" was in Dunmanway, and we had "Baron Hastings" there the next year after "York."

9163. But the farmers down there would not pay a heavy fee for a thoroughbred horse?—No, sir, they won't pay the fee that is charged when they get a stallion. Fellows will be coming to them and saying, "You need not be to the trouble of sending your mare away; we will bring a stallion into the yard to you."

9164. But the £1 2*s.* 6*d.* they paid under the first Royal Dublin Society's scheme was the utmost they could pay?—Yes, and they paid that to me very freely as secretary with Mr Herrick for West Cork at the Shows.

9165. Therefore it would be quite impracticable for any private individual to attempt to supply that district with good and suitable horses. You would not get a thoroughbred horse of the class of "York" for less than two or three hundred pounds. It would not pay a man to keep that horse and let him out at £1?—He could not afford to do it at all.

9166. In fact, if that county is to be served by thoroughbred sires it must be done by some subsidy by a public body?—Yes, unless we get more landlords like Sir John Arnott to turn up there.

9167. In North Cork there are a lot of good stallions?—Yes, sir.

9168. There are a certain number of half-bred stallions there that breed very useful hunters?—Yes, there are some.

9169. There is "Garrett," for instance; I don't know whether he is living?—Yes, and there was a horse called "Old Rockingham" in South Cork, and colts by him out of some of the old mares up to 20 years old are watched yet, they are such very good horses.

9170. I think there are some sons of "Garrett" covering too?—I believe there are.

9171. It has been pointed out to us by some of the witnesses that it would be extremely difficult to get half-bred sires, the sort of half-bred sires represented by "Garrett" and "Old Rockingham." Do you think it would be possible in the county Cork to get some? Do you see them out hunting?—To get some stallions got by them?

9172. Such stallions as "Garrett," or sons of "Garrett," or "Old Rockingham"?—You would get a good many of them of course, but "Old Rockingham," I believe, has gone; but the mares are there got by him.

9173. I mean stallions. Do you, as a matter of fact, see well-bred hunter-like stallions like him in Cork?—There are none like him near Cork. There might be a few in the Duhallow country, but that I don't know.

9174. Then you think it would be an assistance in keeping mares in the country if a certain number of mares were given prizes from £5 to £7?—I believe it would—that is, if it was given at one of the local shows; not to have a separate show in the autumn, as we have now for it, because along with coming for their prizes people like to see something besides the few brood mares when they are coming to it.

9175. But do you think that if a man was offered £50 for a three year old mare, the fact of its being possible for him to win a prize of £7 with it would cause him to decline that offer?—The general run would not refuse it.

9176. And still £50 is not an extravagant price for a three-year old?—Well, it is a good price for a three-year old mare; if you catch her off the grass it would pay well.

9177. Don't you think that a prize that would be of use in inducing a farmer to keep a good mare, and decline to sell her, would have to be so large that if spread over the whole of Ireland would necessitate the expenditure of a whole lot of money?—It would have to be a considerable amount of money, no doubt. If you gave a prize of £20 or £30 to the mares you might induce farmers to refuse £50.

9178. For a three-year old?—Of course you would get mares that would breed well, that would be sound and good-looking, that the farmers would keep on working for a smaller prize than £20.

9179. They would keep the ones they could not get more than £30 for, and sell the ones they could get £50 for?—That would be because it would not pay the farmers to work a mare worth more than £50.

9180. Mr. WRENCH.—What class are the agricultural horses you refer to, are they Clydesdale that you have prizes for in the show?—For heavy cart horses we have Clydesdales and Shires; we have not separate classes.

9181. They are all shown in the same class?—Yes.

9182. Do you think they are becoming more popular or the reverse among the farmers?—I think, as far as I can see of late years, they were getting such bad prices for light colts, they were running a bit weedy, they would rather have the heavy horses.

9183. Then you think they are becoming more popular?—I think so, for small farmers to sell their young horses.

9184. In your catalogue do you put in the pedigrees of the horses that are entered—you have a catalogue for the show?—We don't put in the pedigree in full, but just how they are got.

9185. Do you put the breeder in too?—Yes.

9186. You don't put how the horse is got without putting in the breeder?—No, sir; the most of the heavy horses shown in Cork are imported horses, and their breeding is given.

9187. I was not thinking so much of the heavy horse now as of the hunter class. Do you ever give a horse's pedigree without knowing who the breeder is?—I suppose they do.

9188. Then it is pretty much as in the Dublin catalogue?—Oh, it is. A lot of them put down the breeding and say "breeder unknown."

9189. Would it help the sale of high-class hunters if people were able to give the true pedigrees?—I am sure it would.

9190. Have you heard it suggested that all horses should be registered through the petty sessions clerk?—I heard it suggested in evidence; I approve of registering all horses, and of not registering a horse unless he was sound.

9191. You would approve of all, horses, mares, and young stock, being registered?—I would approve of registering sound mares, and if they were inspected by a committee you would get sound mares. I would not have weedy mares unfit for breeding registered.

9192. And you think that any regulations like that would be better carried out through the Cork Agricultural Society than through a central body like the Dublin Society?—I think it would, sir; the Cork Society has members all over the county. Of course the county committee of the Dublin Society could work it too.

9193. They are all members of the Cork Agricultural Society?—The most of them are.

9194. And the dealers that attend fairs in Cork, are they chiefly men who buy hunters and remounts?—That is who buy high-class horses, they are, sir. We have a lot of gentlemen from England that come to our show and buy hunters.

9195. What class of men buy agricultural horses?—We have dealers in the small towns, shippers.

9196. CHAIRMAN—Is there in your part of the country, or was there what you may call a distinct type of Irish mare, we frequently hear of the old Irish mare, what is your idea of her?—The mares got by a horse like "Rockingham," they are all well-bred looking mares, can stay well, with plenty of life in them, good, long, low, stout mares.

9197. Are there as many of them in the country now as 20 or 30 years ago?—I could not tell you 20 or 30 years ago. There are a good many. Some of the people stick to them year after year in their breeding.

9198. Lord RATHDONNEL.—There is one question I wanted to ask you. Do you know why the Royal Dublin Society wanted to have sound two or three year old fillies stinted to registered stallions?—They wanted to encourage farmers to breed from young mares so that they could sell them at three or four year old. By having them breed from two or three-year-old mares I should think they thought that they could sell them after that, and they would have one good colt kept. I think that was it.

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9199. Partly that. Is it probable a dealer would not buy a two-year-old filly if she was stinted, or a three year old with a foal at foot, to take out of the country?—That is it, that when a farmer had his mare stinted he should keep her.

9200. CHAIRMAN.—Anything else you would like to say to the Commission?—Well, the only thing is that as I told you before about our society, that we are afraid we will have to reduce our prizes this year unless we get some share of the Government grant to improve the breeding of horses in the district. We do all we can, but the weather was awful on us this year, and we lost nearly £500 on the three days' show.

9201. You think your local efforts would be attended with more success if you had larger means?—I do, indeed.

Mr. W. E. Rutledge.

Mr. W. E. RUTLEDGE, Carra Villa, Hollymount Co. Mayo, examined.

9202. CHAIRMAN.—You are secretary of the Hollymount Agricultural Society, are you not?—Yes, I am.

9203. Do you live at Hollymount?—Yes, in the neighbourhood.

9204. I presume that society is like the Cork Society just mentioned, that it is concerned with agricultural matters generally, and devotes its attention also among them to horse-breeding?—Yes.

9205. Now, in your part of the country have you got any specimens of the old Irish mare?—Yes, and the Hollymount Society are very anxious to do everything in their power to trace back the old Irish breed, for we know by experience that wherever such a mare turns up that there is no better method of getting a high-class hunter than a cross between the old Irish mare and the thoroughbred stallion, and, therefore, we are taking steps to trace back and revive the old breed if we possibly can, and we believe that it is not at all impossible to do it.

9206. Have you any idea how the animal you speak of was originated or bred?—Well, you see in years gone by the old Irish mare, it was a necessity to have her a good hardy active animal. Before railways were established the trade of the country was carried on from the city of Dublin to provincial towns by carting shop goods, and an animal to live on the roads from day to day drawing 20 to 25 cwt. from Dublin to Sligo or from Dublin to Castlebar or Westport should be a hardy animal, and to come back to the city again with eggs or something else. When we opened a class for Irish agricultural horses it became my duty as secretary for the Hollymount Society to make all the inquiry I possibly could about the breed, and those men who knew it, the oldest and most intelligent I could refer to, gave me a good deal of information. At that time they had not cars, and this Irish mare was often obliged to carry two, the head of the house and his better half had often to sit on the back of the old Irish mare, a saddle and pillion behind. It took a good animal to carry two twenty miles. She was a hardy animal, and there are some traces of that breed to be found. That continued until after the famine and then the Clydesdales were introduced to the neighbourhood unfortunately, but in the days I speak of it was necessary to get up strength, and the only way they had to do that was from the hunter stallions kept by resident gentlemen; it was important for the men engaged in this carting business to have strength, and they kept in those days some of the good fillies, and to get additional strength they had to go to the hunter stallion. A good many of them were kept through the country, and there was a dash of good blood in the old mare, but then when the Scotch farmers came over and took farms in my neighbourhood they introduced the Clydesdale, and the Irish breed was found so valuable that all the high-class dealers followed the colt and gave a high price for it, so that the farmer could not resist taking it, and in that way they have been wed out of the country, and then for more strength they had to fall back on the Clydesdale. The Clydesdale was introduced by Mr. Laurie and Mr. Simpson, large Scotch farmers. The Suffolk Punch was introduced by the late Lord Lucan, who farmed extensively, and the Irish breed got crossed in that way, and these breeds that were introduced they are not good for produ ing hunters. They will have size but certainly they are not good. And another class I bred from myself was the Cleveland Bay, and I was very sorry for it. That was a horse that was intoduced by Mr. Pollock and bought from him by Mr. Simpson, a grand looking horse to see, like a hunter; he was a dark bay standing on black legs with plenty of bone under the knee, and well topped, the colt was also good and would fetch a fair price on account of his size and appearance, but when you came to work him he was a slug. The man who bought him from me came back and said he was very sorry ever to have had anything to do with him. You see in a district breeding hunters that strain is injurious, for if a colt looks well and you get a good price the same man won't come back to you again for another. Those three classes, I believe, were injurious to the hunter breeding districts.

9207. Well, the old Irish mare, Mr. Rutledge, you speak of, originated in the necessity for a hardy animal with some breeding and endurance, because all the work of the country had to be done by carting, and people rode about a good deal; now that state of things has passed away, do you think that there is any way in which this particular breed could be revived and preserved?—Yes, I think there is.

9208. The natural necessity does not exist for it, as it did formerly?—No, but in districts where hunters are bred I think it would be well worth the while of any society to do everything in their power to revive that breed, and there are some strains to be found that I think we should follow. I would ask your lordship to look at our prize list for 1894, I have it here. We have three classes, first, the thoroughbred class, for the best thoroughbred sire, first prize, silver medal and £10; second prize, £5; third prize, £3. The second class is for the half-bred sire calculated to get hunters or harness horses—first prize, silver medal and £4; second prize, £2; third, £1; entrance fee, 10s. Here is the class I wish particularly to draw some attention to, class 3, for the best Irish agricultural stallion measuring not less than 15.3, and under the knee 9 inches, calculated to get strong, active, clean-legged Irish farm horses or weight-carrying hunters. Any stallion entered in Class 1 or 2 not eligible. First Prize, silver medal and £4; second, £2; third, £1. Entrance fee, 2s. 6d. In that class we intentionally charge a very low fee, to encourage the men who keep them to take them out to be exhibited, in order to pick out the old strain. You see there are three classes, and we believe that you might as well try to do away with the Society if you failed to maintain any one of the three classes on which the Society rests. We want the aristocracy, we want the middle classes, and we want the peasantry, and we want the corresponding classes in horseflesh. The farmers say, "If you send us light thoroughbreds they are no use to us, they won't be suitable for our work," and if they go the first year well the foal by that crop will be tolerably good. Well, if they keep the foal bred by a thoroughbred horse—and the farmers in my district don't buy, they rear their own foals or buy from each other—if he sends that filly back again to another thoroughbred horse it becomes lighter and lighter, and the result will be that the animal won't be suitable for the farmers' purposes. If the Irish agricultural horse could be bred out of the old strain, and bred pure, if you

could get a mare out of the same stamp, and to breed, so that you would have them as a foundation to fall back upon, and if you just consider the number of horses, I believe there are 2,500 stallions serving in the whole of Ireland. Well, the number of registered stallions, I think, would be only about 235 of the 500. The balance then would be between Hackneys and a few racing stallions. Then the 2,000 are left out; no one appears to pay much attention to the 2,000 which produce a large number of foals in the country. In Hollymount we want to draw attention to these 2,000 horses. Of this class I know two that have the old strain of Irish blood in them.

9209. Mares or horses?—Two stallions; one belongs to a man of the name of Lee, he stands near Headfort, and comes into Ballinrobe. His sire and grandsire have been known by the farmers about there to breed excellent horses. Of course they are breeding strong. They get them with as much bone almost as a Clydesdale, but none of the hair, and they have a very good shoulder, great endurance. They are favourites, in fact, with the farmers, and any of them that have these mares when they send them to thoroughbreds get excellent colts. There is another horse called "Thunderbolt," in the co. Galway, also of the stamp of the old Irish blood, if these could be picked out.

9210. Do you know how those horses were bred?—This horse of Lee's was bred by another horse that stood in the neighbourhood, called "Old Hercules;" this horse's name is "Hercules II." "Old Hercules" was got by—I think I have his pedigree in the catalogue.

9211. Do you know what the dams were?—The old Irish mare.

9212. Have you ever seen them?—No; but I have seen "Hercules."

9213. Tell me about the dam?—There is no Clydesdale blood in them. These horses serve, I suppose, about eighty mares in the season.

9214. Have you any idea how this breed of Irish mares, originated?—Well I believe, as far as I know, there is some of the breed in the country, and they have been crossed by these hunter stallions that were got by a thoroughbred. There were not so many thoroughbreds in the country then as there are now. There were some good ones. I believe the old Marquis of Sligo brought a good horse into Mayo, called "Wedge." Some of the gentlemen bred hunter stallions from this, and the farmers that had an old Irish mare sent them to get size and substance to the hunter stallions kept by the gentlemen who owned them in those days, and who used to have races then at the end of the season. But as the old men tell me a race now is not to be compared with a race then. Now it is a little short race, and when a horse is done you will see his tail wagging up and down as if his life was dropping out of him. Then they had to go three miles round, and three heats; they had to have some staying power.

9215. You have spoken generally about the importance of the sires. Do you attach much more importance to the breeding of the sires than to the breeding of the dam?—I attach great importance to both. But with regard to class 2, what we call the half-bred class, I wish to draw attention to that; I think it is very important; we want, if possible, to have that a hunter class, and I believe it would be a good thing if that half-bred idea could be got rid of.

9216. What is the half-bred idea. Just tell us what the class is?—Class II.

9217. You better read it out?—"For the best half-bred sire calculated to get hunters or harness horses, first prize, silver medal and £4; second, £2; third, £1." In addition to having thoroughbred horses, those, if you got one of them, with three or four crosses, one qualified to be in the Hunters Improvement Stud Book, one of those would be far better than a light weedy thoroughbred, and we know by experience it would get more saleable colts.

9218. You approve of the half-bred sire?—Yes, if sufficiently bred and qualified to be entered in the Hunters Stud Book. The Hollymount Society have made an arrangement with the Hunter Improvement Society for entering these horses. We don't want to have the Irish bred horses mixed up in the stud book with the English bred, we like to have them separate, and we stated this to the secretary that we would feel inclined to register if he would give us a separate portion of the book, and to have the Irish bred hunters registered under the name of Irish hunters, and to have a county index, so that we would have the Irish bred ones in a group, and that we could refer immediately to the Irish stallion or Irish mares belonging to men in the different counties and standing in those counties, and this is the letter that the secretary, Mr. Charleton, has written to me.

9219. Is the question settled, have you made an arrangement with them?—Yes, so far as our society.

9220. Then you had better tell us what the arrangement is?—The arrangement is—you will understand it better if I read what he says:—"Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you that the proposals in regard to the Irish section in the record were favourably considered by the Council yesterday, when the following resolutions were carried:—'The Committee recommend that provided fifty entries of hunter stallions and mares, Irish bred and Irish owned, are received for vol. 7 of the Record a separate section of the book will be reserved for the registry of such animals under the designation of Irish hunters with a county index, as suggested. 2nd. To assist the scheme of registration in Ireland the committee would recommend that the Council do issue to any associated Irish society a nomination book containing fifty certificates for distribution to their respective subscribers enabling them to register their hunter mares and sires in the Record at the members rate." The members rate I believe will be a cheap rate, the rate to non-members, I understand, will be 10*s.*, and to any provincial society that wished to take it up it would be 5*s.* We believe it would be more convenient to register in this Hunter Stud Book that is already established; that it would be an additional advantage, provided it is separate, to have them in the book in London, where buyers would see them immediately and know what class of hunters were to be had and how they were bred in the different districts. That is our principal reason for making this arrangement. "I shall communicate this to you and the other Irish societies in a circular letter, and as the Council have striven to meet your views, I hope that you will endeavour to obtain the co-operation of all Irish societies, so that the section proposed may be well supported. Nomination forms will be prepared and sent out to you." I believe they will be sent to other provincial societies as well.

9221. To that your society agreed?—Yes.

9222. And that is the arrangement you have made?—Yes. We are anxious to have these hunters we have in the Stud Book, because we are anxious to breed from them, and if we can breed pure-bred Irish hunters to stamp them in the course of a few years as an Irish breed.

9223. What steps do you propose to take to do so?—That is just what I want to explain. Here is one: I would hand this in that you may look at the pedigree, a horse called "Lochinvar." You will see his pedigree and performances (produced).

9224. I don't think you need go into details of the particular horses. I want to know the steps you intend to take to carry out your object?—Now, this volume of the Stud Book refers to the mares. What we propose to do is, the mares that have won the gold medal as hunter mares, there are two of these standing in the county belonging to Mr. Egan and Mr. Coghlan, and they have agreed to send their mares to "Lochinvar," the hunter stallion, and try to breed some colts. If we succeed we intend opening two classes for these colts,

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for as it is all the good colts are taken away out of the country by dealers, and of course the worst ones left; and that is the great cause of the inferior class of horses in the country. If there is a good one the dealer offers such a high price that the owner won't keep him, and then he goes as a gelding. We want to keep some of the best Irish bred colts for this purpose to have a pure bred hunter class.

9225. You want to establish it as a distinct class?—Yes. We want to keep up a mare of equal breeding and equal size to the horse of that class in order to breed from them. Then if the different provincial societies would do that, suppose we open a class for yearling colts and another class for two-year-old colts, it would be necessary in order to induce men to keep good hunting colts to be able to give high prizes. It is a troublesome thing to keep a colt. You have to give him special care, and if there is not some inducement held out the breeder won't keep them for breeding purposes. He will take a high price from a dealer, and then the animal becomes useless for stud purposes. If other provincial societies would do the same thing, supposing they had these two classes established, in each class there would be three prize winners. If the Royal Dublin Society then would open corresponding classes and get all the prize winners up to the show at Ballsbridge to compete, and the prize winners there to be bought for stud purposes and sent down then to the country and give them out on the three years' system. We are anxious to get these 2,000 common stallions replaced by younger hunting stallions that would be selected in that way, proved to be properly bred and qualified to be entered in the Stud Book. That is what we are anxious to work out if we could possibly do it. We believe by that means the breeding of hunters would be improved.

9226. You still appear to me to attach great importance, almost exclusive importance, to the sire?—Oh, no.

9227. Well, I call your attention to the fact that you have said nothing throughout as to the desirability of keeping fillies?—Oh, yes, it is a most important thing.

9228. Well, you have said nothing about it?—If you have only patience with me. I am afraid, perhaps, I am tiring you.

9229. Not at all, I only want to know what you say about these things?—Well, it is a surprising thing that there are so many good hunters to be found in Ireland, for take them as foals, the very best foals are bought up and taken out of the country, then your are left weeds as yearlings, the best are taken away, bought at country fairs, and then you have left the worst of the yearlings, the same applies to two-year-olds and so on. How to induce the farmers to keep a better class of mares is a very important thing, and I think it is quite possible to do it if we had control. Of course if there was plenty of money it would be an excellent thing to continue those prizes that the Royal Dublin Society gives, but suppose we are obliged to work with the amount we have, and we can get no more, I think it could be turned to better account.

9230. In what way?—Suppose we get £100 for the County Mayo, I would not give one penny of that in prizes under existing circumstances. If that could be turned to account in this way: if a few farmers could be got to co-operate, and some gentlemen of the district as well, say twenty, if they would pay £5 each, or guarantee the payment of £5, that would be another £100 a year; if we could use that and borrow some funds, and to open a stud farm and to buy up the foals that these men sell. For take it in this way, now I am alluding to poor farmers, the poor farmer who has a taste for a good mare will send it to a thoroughbred horse, the men I am alluding to must sell their foals. He sends in his well-bred foal, and will not get more than a man who sends to a Clydesdale. A Clydesdale looks plump and fat as a foal, and a man who does not care about breeding, and don't understand it, won't give for the well-bred foal as much. That man is discouraged, and won't go back again to breed from a thoroughbred. If there could be a society established in this way to buy up and raise the price of the well-bred foal, and to keep that foal until it would come of age, or to give the farmer means to keep it and to take good care of it. As a rule farmers don't take proper care of their foals, and they are stunted in growth, but if the society could buy them when these small farmers are forced to sell.

9231. What would you do with them when you had bought them?—I would then rear them, I would buy also yearlings if we had means, and two-year-olds when the farmer would be obliged to sell, I would keep them until four-year-old, and then if the Government who buy from dealers would come and give the same price to this society that they would give to the dealer, it would enable the society to give higher prices for the well-bred foals, and I believe it would be a far better encouragemet to the farmers to breed well-bred foals by giving them good prices, than by giving a few pounds in prizes at local shows.

9232. You would like to get up a society to give the farmers more than the market price for their produce?—More than the price they are going at, because, I believe the well-bred foal is going for less than its value, I would like to increase the price of the well-bred foal to induce the farmer to understand the value of it, and I believe it would be a great improvement.

9233. That would have no effect upon keeping them in the country, would it?—Oh, yes, I am just coming to that, I think it would be the real thing to induce them. There must be a good filly, perhaps, among those foals, and if she grew up to be a good three-year-old I would then say to the farmer that wanted one "Here is a filly, and if you take her, say at £20," a farmer won't give more for a filly than £20, I would then lease that filly, I would not allow the farmer to part with her, because if he has power to do so he will take the high price and it will go out of the country, but the filly should remain the property of the Society, and the farmer should get her paying £2 a year. I would also have a standard as to height. I would have no mare under 15.2, with corresponding bone and action, if you had that then, to those farmers that would have a taste for them, and would be anxious to get the possession of a good mare I would say "yes, I will give you this mare, you pay it back to the Society at £2 a year, you will have a lease, but if you get into debt, this mare is not your property, she must not be sold." In that way the farmer would feel it was his interest to keep a good mare, and in the course of ten years he would have a number of good foals, and the Society could help him out in selling them, I would register those mares and how they were bred. If the farmer himself could rear the foal I would encourage him to do it.

9234. Has your Society tried to get up an association of any kind for the various purposes you have mentioned?—No, it is what we would do if we could borrow money, that is the scheme we would wish to carry out, and we believe it would have a great tendency to improve the breed of horses in the district.

9235. I take it that you think generally that the introduction of Clydesdale and other blood has been more or less detrimental to the country?—Very much in the line of breeding hunters.

9236. And you think the best thing you could do is to try to get back to the old Irish strain?—Yes.

9237. I would just like to ask you again about the position of mares because I think when you look at your evidence you will see that you continually keep talking about the importance of the stallion which nobody denies, but you say nothing about the importance of the mare, or very little?—I say that we would be anxious to lease to farmers suitable fillies,

likely to turn out valuable brood mares, suitable to be sent to other hunter sires by thoroughbred sires, I mean to convey that we are anxious to encourage them to keep the superior class of mare.

9238. Do you think the old Irish mare sent to a suitable stallion would produce the kind of hunter you require?—Yes, and that is the experience too of those who had them, and those that bred from them found by experience that when they continued to send the fillies got by thoroughbreds back to a thoroughbred that in two or three generations they got weeds, had nothing to fall back upon.

9239. Were there many horses exhibited in class 2 at your show, half-bred sires?—No, there were not many in class 2, but there was a considerable number in class 3.

9240. But I asked you about class 2?—There were only three, but last year we had a larger number.

9241. I was asking you about last year?—I was referring to 1894 when we opened the class.

9242. Perhaps you will give us the numbers for 1894-95-96?—Class 2, there were eight last year.

9243. That is a considerable increase?—A very considerable increase.

9244. Then as to class 3, has there been an increase in that?—Yes, there were five in class 3 last year.

9245. How many in 1894?—Ten.

9246. Then there has been a decrease?—There has been a decrease, they have not come up, but they are in the country, a great number of them, in fact, the majority of stallions in the country, known as common stallions, there is a very large amount of them, and if they are not improved horse-breeding won't be improved.

9247. How is your part of the country off for thoroughbred stallions?—Well, we have only one registered stallion, "Fife," in the whole county. He is a nice little horse.

9248. Have you many that are not registered?—There are a few that are not registered, not very many. There is one good horse in Ballina, that belongs to Miss Knox Gore, called "North Mayo," he is not registered, he is a very fine one I understand.

9249. Have you any experience of the introduction of Hackney blood?—Not myself; but they are very useful, I believe, in the Congested Districts, they would not suit for breeding hunters, they are certainly preferable to Clydesdales; if you get the large size, if you get a Hackney up to 15.3, a horse under that does not suit us in my district, but the Hackney is a smarter horse than the Clydesdale, and, I believe, would be a better horse than the Clydesdale or Suffolk Punch; but, I believe, we could have better if we had those hunters.

9250. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Your idea in breeding those hunters, I understand, was to breed up a breed of animals to use as country stallions?—Yes; we believe it would be very important and a great encouragement if some of these colts could be brought from the breeder for the army, or a society that would breed them up.

9251. CHAIRMAN.—Anything else you would like to tell the Commission. I might perhaps ask you a question, if you succeeded in establishing or re-establishing this breed of old Irish mares, would you propose to keep a stud book of them, or to register them in any way?—Oh, yes, we would propose to keep a stud book, we would propose to leave the registration of the higher class hunter to the Hunters' Improvement Society, but to keep a stud book for the Irish agricultural stallion. We want to improve that class into a heavy class hunter that would not be qualified for entry into the Hunters' Improvement Society's book, but we would like if the Royal Dublin Society would take that book up. It is a troublesome thing to keep a stud book, and although we started it in Hollymount, we found there was a good deal of labour, and a local society has not the means for that; but if the Royal Dublin Society took that up and got other provincial societies to trace out that breed and get up a stud book. What we proposed doing was to take the prize winners in class 6, that was for farmer's mares, and send them to selected stallions, and to try to have a pure breed, the sire and dam to be equal in size and appearance and colour. We attach great importance to that.

9252. Anything else you wish to say to the Commission?—The cause of the large number of these inferior animals to be met with at the country fairs is this selecting and purchase by dealers of all the good ones. If you bred sheep or anything else and just sold out the best of the flock, and kept the culls, they will dwindle away, and the same we believe applies to mares, and we don't see any way of inducing the farmers, who are forced by circumstances to sell, to keep their good ones unless there is some system of leasing mares to them.

9253. That you have already described to us?—Yes, except you have some means of keeping the good mares in the country, we look on it as impossible to improve the breed. No matter how good the stallions are they cannot do the whole thing, they can only do half. We believe—I said that before—that there should be a standard for testing the height and appearance of mares. Under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, the old scheme the mares were selected, I happened to be secretary to the local committee, and under the old scheme when nominations were given we generally separated the mares, the mares up to 15 hands and upwards if they were suitable they got a preference; if we had not enough of those we put some of the best under 15 hands on the other side, and if the veterinary surgeon then in examining those 15 hands and upwards disqualified any on account of unsoundness, then we would fall back on the mares under 15 hands and get a few of those; but in the present scheme there is no selection whatever, every man can go himself and bring his mare whether sound or unsound to the stallion, so the older system, I think, was the better system.

9254. Lord RATHDONNEL.—Do you say that under the present scheme of the Dublin Society, any man can take a mare to the show?—To the stallion, there is no selection.

9255. Under the Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes.

9256. Are you not aware that the mares are selected by the committees in each county?—They are not.

9257. Then that is the first time that I ever heard it?—Not selected at all under the new scheme. Any man can send his mare, under the new scheme, to the registered stallion.

9258. Any man outside the scheme can send his mare to whatever stallion he likes?—No, but any man under the scheme can send it too, there is no selection, it is only when he comes to seek for the prize, he cannot get the prize without selection.

9259. How is he under the scheme if he does not get a prize?—He may send to the registered sire.

9260. Is he under the scheme?—Yes, certainly, any man under the £150 valuation is under the scheme.

9261. But the mares are selected?—Not before they go to the sire.

9262. I always understood they were selected, and had to pass a veterinary surgeon?—That was the old scheme, but not at all under the new scheme until they come to seek for a prize.

9263. That is the first time I heard it?—That is the fact for the last two years, but they cannot get a prize without being examined by a veterinary surgeon.

9264. CHAIRMAN.—Anything else you would wish to say to the Commission?—I would say that supposing that society were formed, and that the prize winners at the provincial shows were sent up for competition to the Dublin show, and corresponding classes were opened there; but that could hardly be carried out, except the railway companies gave some facilities. I think it would be very important if carried out, because it is an expensive thing to keep these colts.

9265. That is rather a matter of detail?—Yes. It

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would be a very important thing if the local society could be helped to get a good sire into the district, there is only the one registered sire in the whole county; we would like a good strong thoroughbred if we could get him.

9266. Anything else, Mr. Rutledge?—Yes; supposing we had that stud farm, and that we had those three classes of horses, I believe it would be well to have a scale of fees, and that to farmers outside, that would be tasty and keep good mares, there might be a few free nominations given. If they get a nomination at a low rate, or a free nomination, they consider it is a great feather in their cap, and they are proud of that sort of thing, and they would, I think, value nominations of that kind more than prizes, and it would reach a larger number, whereas, if a few have two or three good mares they will come back two or three years in succession to win prizes. Then, with regard to the young colts in the district where that stud farm would be established, supposing it was established that they should be registered, and an account kept of how they were bred, and what size they were, so that any person coming to the district to buy would at once find the reference, and ascertain all about them, and where they could be seen, supposing the farmers themselves reared them, and supposing the society were established, if a farmer wished to go himself to a country fair and select his own mares.

9267. Those are details and rules for this problematical society?—Yes, but don't you consider them important.

9268. I don't say they are not; but until there is a society, perhaps it is rather premature to go into great detail. I think we have got very fairly your general opinion, but if you have got anything further to say?—No, I have nothing else.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

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EIGHTEENTH DAY.—THURSDAY, JANUARY 7TH, 1897.

Present:—THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM, LORD RATHDONNELL, COLONEL ST. QUINTIN, Mr. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. R. JOHNSON, Fountainville, Belfast, examined.

Mr. R. Johnson.

9269. CHAIRMAN.—You live near Belfast?—Yes.

9270. You are engaged in dealing in horses?—I am, I might say since I was a child. I have been thirty-seven years, ever since 1860, trading on my own account, and I was with my father for years before that.

9271. Do you think the importation of American horses has had any effect upon the trade in hunters in your part of the country?—American horses! Not the slightest on hunters, but they have reduced the price of harness horses very much. I may tell you if they had not American horses coming over it would be very difficult to get harness horses in Ireland at all; although I have a lot of American horses, I don't approve of them at all. Once they go lame you can scarcely ever get them sound again. They are liable to take rheumatism.

9272. You don't like them?—Until they are acclimatised they are not very much use. They are liable to pains in their shoulders and their feet. They are not used to our macadamised roads. Very often a horse is not shod in America. They are never shod until they come over here.

9273. Are they passed off as Irish horses?—Very seldom; any man of judgment would know an American horse. They are not the same formation as the Irish horse at all, and none, at least very few, that I have ever seen would make a hunter.

9274. Hunters apart, are there many of them imported into the North of Ireland?—There have been I think a dozen sales by persons who brought over American horses, but I don't think they bring the best over here. They have sales in Liverpool and Glasgow and other cities, and I think they only bring over the leavings of what they cannot sell. I don't think the best horses come over here.

9275. What becomes of the American horses after they have been imported into the North of Ireland?—I think they go generally for trades people's vans and such like, and some gentlemen buy them for harness horses.

9276. You don't think they are resold as Irish horses?—They may dock them and sell them as Irish horses, but any man of good judgment and experience would easily know the difference between a Yankee horse and an Irish horse.

9277. What class do you generally deal in, carriage horses?—I deal in the best horses of different classes. I buy hunters, harness horses, and tramway horses. I buy my horses in the South of Ireland entirely, myself and my sons buy in the counties of Cork, Waterford, Wexford, Limerick, and all the principal places throughout the south.

9278. You have had a long experience, Mr. Johnson; do you think, generally speaking, the prices are about the same as formerly?—I think a good hunter is worth as much money as ever. In fact if you meet a good horse like a hunter, a young horse in a fair, my experience at the present time is if he is a good horse you must buy him or you will never get the chance again. I remember thirty or thirty-five years ago if you saw a good horse at Cahirmee or some of the big fairs and a man asking an extravagant price you might let him run perhaps a day and buy him the second or third day, but at the present time in all the large fairs there is such competition for a good horse that if you meet a good horse, a really good horse, you must buy at once or you will never get the chance again.

9279. The competition then for a really good horse is keener than it was?—A good horse we can sell as well and better than ever, a hunter.

9280. Is the reason of the great keenness of competition that the supply of good horses is less and the demand greater?—I think the supply is a very great deal less. It is very difficult to get a good horse.

9281. That is speaking of hunters?—Yes.

9282. Throughout the country generally there are not so many of what would be called first-class hunters bred as formerly?—There are not.

9283. What about high-class harness horses?—You can scarcely get a good harness horse. I have at the present time and for the last two months an order for three pair of carriage horses, and my sons and I have travelled all the best fairs and we cannot get them. You can get them at the age of three or four years;

but you cannot get five or six-year-old horses. A good horse you can scarcely get at five or six years of age.

9284. Do you attend the fairs, or do you buy at the houses?—I buy always and all my life off the breeders.

9285. Then I take it from you that you think, as far as hunters are concerned, the supply is not as good as it used to be, and that as regards high-class harness horses they are exceedingly scarce, scarcer than they used to be?—They are.

9286. Can you account for that in any way?—I would account for it that they don't breed the right horses, from the right horses or the right mares in the majority of cases. If you go to the Munster fair at Limerick you will see thousands of horses there, and, perhaps, you could not take one in a hundred that would make a useful horse, whatever class it may be. My great objection to the farmers is that they are not particular enough in breeding off mares of good straight action, and that they nearly all breed from long-backed weak-backed mares that they can't sell. For instance, if a farmer has two mares he will bring them out to a fair to sell them. If he has a really good mare with a good short back, and good shoulders and quarters, that mare will make a good sale; and if he has an unsound one with a long back she is brought home and bred from. Then the majority of the thoroughbred stallions are weak and twisty in their legs, toed in or toed the other way, and very objectionable in their action; and, unless that horse gets a mare with straight, good action and a good back and strong limbs, the produce is of no earthly use to be sold at any price.

9287. Have you considered any practical means whereby the farmers can be induced to breed from their best mares instead of their worst mares?—My idea is that you should give them inducements by prizes to keep their best mares and breed from them. My idea is—and from my experience I know they did it formerly in the county Meath and in Westmeath, and [round that country, the farmers used to serve their two-year-old fillies. They took their best fillies and served them and they would have a foal at three-year-old and perhaps another at four-year-old, and perhaps another at five-year-old, and then when the mare was coming on six-year-old she might miss; then that mare can very easily be trained or may have been trained in the meantime, and then they brought her out and they would get as good a price as if she never had a foal at all. A three-year-old is not too young to have a foal. This was before they got so much into the cattle trade through Meath and Westmeath that they bred principally the best horses commencing with two-year-old fillies. They were wide strong short-legged nice mares with quality, good head and neck, and shoulders, and good back and loins, and the tail well up, and got by the very best thoroughbred horses produced. They got a very good price for the stock of these young mares.

9288. What is your opinion as to the class of thoroughbred stallions about the country?—I think there are a great many inferior horses. There are a great many very good ones privately kept in the county of Cork, not Government horses as they are called. I have myself seen a good many very good horses.

9289. What kind of horses do they breed about Belfast?—They are inclined to breed good horses, but I don't know how it is they never can, at least perhaps one in a hundred. You can scarcely ever get a good horse in the county of Down or the county of Antrim. It is either the fault of the mare or the stallion, although there are some very good stallions down there. They have bred some very good horses for harness work, or for artillery or general purposes, off half-bred horses. There is a breed of horses down there from "Harkaway"—half-bred horses—and they have got a very useful breed of horses, horses that command good prices, useful horses with stepping action.

9290. Are there many horses bought in the south young and kept up in the North?—Oh! yes. There is not a fair in the South that there are not dozens of young horses bought in it, taken down to the North, fed and kept there for perhaps six months or twelve months.

9291. To what kind of work are they put?—The majority of them never work at all, that is the worst of it. They are fed like stall-fed bullocks. The farmers never give them a bit of exercise, and they are brought out to Moy fair and they are good horses spoiled for want of work and exercise, hardly one of them properly mouthed. A three-year-old horse in the South has a mouth as handy as a ten-year-old, but if you buy one of these produced in the North they have neither manners nor mouth.

9292. Do you buy horses in England at all?—No, I never bought a horse in England in my life. I often sold them there.

9293. It is immaterial to you whether horses turn out hunters or carriage horses?—It is a wonderful difference. They are worth a lot more as hunters. You often buy a harness horse and he often turns out a good hunter.

9294. And the opposite takes place?—I suppose very often.

9295. Do you think anything should be done to try to induce the farmers to breed more for harness horses rather than for hunters?—I think not. If you get a good half-bred Irish mare and a really good thoroughbred horse with straight action you will have either a hunter or a harness horse.

9296. Do many foreign buyers buy here?—The principal customers I have are foreigners—Germans, Swiss, and Italians.

9297. What do they buy for?—I have sold them a lot of horses for both the Swiss and Italian armies. The Germans produce their own horses. The Government there buy directly from the farmers. I sold a lot of good mares to go to Germany. The best mares go out of Ireland to England, and the foreigners buy them.

9298. More so of late years than they used to do?—Yes.

9299. I suppose they give a bigger price for them?—I think they do. A buyer named Oppenheim comes over from Hanover and he buys more mares than any man I ever met. He took nearly a hundred mares from the York Christmas Show. He comes over to me three or four times a year, and he seldom takes away less than 100 mares.

9300. All mares?—Mares, the best he can get, and the class of mares he buys would be the sort to keep in the country to improve the breed. He will buy from four-year-old to any age.

9301. Do you buy horses at all on the western seaboard, in the congested districts?—No, I never buy there. I don't care for Connaught at all. I keep as near to the sunny south as possible.

9302. May I take it then that you can give us no idea of the effect the Congested Districts Board's scheme has had on horse-breeding?—Not the slightest. The only thing I would suggest from what I know of the class of cobs around in those parts, what I would suggest would be to get a small thoroughbred stallion for breeding polo ponies, or a good Welsh cob. I think that would improve the breed very much.

9303. Have you in your dealings come across many cases of hunters bred out of Connemara ponies?—No.

9304. Not perhaps the dam but the grand dam?—No, I don't think I ever had any.

9305. Do you go to any extent into the pedigree of the horses you buy?—Yes.

9306. Do you think you can generally rely on the pedigrees you get?—I think the farmers through the south of Ireland are very truthful that way. I very seldom or ever get a wrong pedigree. Some people, no doubt, would give a wrong pedigree, but I think they are very few. The people I generally buy off are people I deal with continually.

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9307. Have you any opinion as to the effect of the introduction of Hackney blood or the Clydesdale blood into Ireland?—I don't like the Hackney myself. I have had several animals got by a Hackney stallion, and they have no staying powers. They will not stay a journey, and I don't think they are very good to rear hunters off.

9308. As carriage horses, do you object to the Hackney blood?—Well, I don't know. I could not recommend it. I would rather have a good half-bred Irish horse to breed from than from them.

9309. Do you think there is any danger of the Hackney blood that you object to gradually percolating all through the country and deteriorating the breed of hunters, or do you think it could be confined to certain districts?—I tell you as far as I am concerned I would not recommend them at all. I have a case in point that I knew that proved to me that they are a very injurious breed. I bought once in Mullingar about as good a mare as ever I owned, a good half-bred mare, and I sold her to a man who hunted her for four or five years, she was a very fast trotter, would do a mile in three minutes, she was the fastest that was ever in our country until the American horses came, and for bye that she was a good huntress and no day too long to ride or drive her. And this man was induced to take her to Lord Charlemont's horse "Broad Arrow," and no doubt, she bred a great looking horse, a tremendous fast horse, I have never seen better action and I have never seen a much faster horse, but that horse could not stay two miles. They tried to bring him up to see if he could not be made to stay, and even sent him to the Maze under a good trainer, but they never could get him to stay for two miles, and the mare being a very good stayer it must be that this thing came from the horse. I have seen horses bred from "Excelsior," the best looking Hackney I ever saw. He was in the county Derry and belonged to the Newtownlimavady Stud Company. I bought several animals got by him at Moy, and there was never one of them worth anything. They were rotten bad beasts.

9310. I would gather from you that you think the old Irish mare is the best class of mare to breed from?—It is.

9311. And you would mate her with a suitable thoroughbred sire?—That is the sort.

9312. You would prefer that to any other?—I would prefer that to any other breed of horse you can have.

9313. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I think you said you generally bought from the breeder?—Yes.

9314. If you go to the same breeder from year to year I suppose you get the produce very often of the same mare?—Very often.

9315. And you are able to note pretty accurately the effect produced by particular stallions?—I don't often go to the people's houses, I generally buy in the open market or fair so I really cannot tell what the produce are like when they are young, as I don't often have an opportunity of seeing them.

9316. It would I suppose be an easy thing to make a note of the effect of different crosses upon the produce of the mares, and if you buy the produce of any mare from year to year it would be easy to notice how the mare is affected by different horses?—Yes.

9317. Do you find a good deal of difference between the produce according to the horse the mare is mated with?—There is no doubt there is a lot. If a man breeds from a really good mare and a thoroughbred horse he seldom or ever fails to get good produce. There are horses for the service of the mares of the poor unfortunate farmers in parts of the country and they should not be allowed to serve at all. They should not be in the country. These horses I assure you are not worth one feed of corn. I remember once down at Bandon, a place where they used to breed a lot of good horses, I saw a lot of stallions there and, I assure you, there was not a horse in the lot worth £1; crooked, twisted and bad legged animals and the poor man who bred from them was only losing his mare's time as they were unfit to serve at all.

9318. Can you suggest any remedy for getting rid of this state of things?—The only thing is to take them away from the people and give them better ones.

9319. CHAIRMAN.—Is the cheapness of the fee the inducement to send the mares to these stallions?—That is it, and a great many of the farmers who breed actually would not know a good horse from a bad one, except that he would fill his eye or the like of that; but as for action and good formation they have not the slightest idea, and I believe they should be protected by the Government in some way.

9320. Lord ASHTOWN.—The horses that are bred in the South and brought to the North, where do they go to, and who buys them?—The majority of them that are brought into the North are bought by English and Scotch people at the different local fairs, and principally at the Moy fair. It has monthly fairs, one of the largest fairs in the country, and there are some other local fairs. Then there are a lot bought up by dealers about the country, and taken to the English fairs.

9321. Lord RATHDONNELL.—The people around Belfast are very fond of trotting horses?—Yes.

9322. They have rather a fancy for a trotting track and for trotting races?—Yes, they have got up a nice track now on the new North-east Society grounds.

9323. I believe you are fond of the track yourself?—No, I never kept a trotter except for my own driving.

9324. Have you ever yourself driven a Hackney at all?—Never.

9325. You always go in for thoroughbred breeding as much as possible?—The best horse ever I had—I kept him for four or five years for my own driving—I bought in Cork city, and he was a harness horse and a hunter. I think there is no Yankee horse would go twenty miles with him. I have had some Yankee horses myself for my own driving, and they are really good; if you get a sound American horse you will have as good a horse for harness as can be, but they are at sea when you put a saddle on their back.

9326. They are not good for riding?—No.

9327. Mr. WRENCH. — "Broad Arrow" and "Excelsior" are the only two Hackneys of which you had any personal experience?—Well, there was a get from "Broad Arrow" called "Broad Acre."

9328. He was not a pure-bred Hackney?—I think not.

9329. I think he was only out of a cross-bred mare belonging to Mr. Johnston, of Rich-hill?—That is the horse, I think.

9330. These were the only two thoroughbred Hackneys you have seen?—Yes.

9331. They were both Norfolk Hackneys, were they not?—I can't tell, I assure you.

9332. You say it is very difficult to get harness horses in Ireland?—Very.

9333. Have you any suggestion as to how it would become easier?—If they would breed from better mares and from a strong thoroughbred horse, or from a good half-bred horse. In the North of Ireland the "Harkaway" breed are both useful and saleable. They are principally dark chestnut.

9334. Does "Harkaway" get horses with good action?—Yes, all.

9335. It is necessary, I suppose, to have action for a good harness horse?—Yes; a harness horse is no use except he has action.

9336. Where do you get the tramway horses?—All over the country.

9337. In any one part of the country more than another?—My sons were in Clonmel yesterday, and Thurles the day before, and in Mallow on New Year's day. They buy a good horse wherever they can get it.

9338. Do you know how they are bred?—They are principally bred from Scotch horses, from Clydesdales.

9339. You think that most of them have Clydesdale blood in them?—They have. There is a great scarcity of them at the present time, and in those places where poor farmers require to take work out of them for two or three years, it would pay them well to breed that class of working horse, and when they are gone four years off to sell them as tramway horses.

9340. Do you know whether many of the cast tramway horses are sold to farmers as brood mares?—I don't know. I have heard that plenty of them are sold. I think there are plenty of the mares would make good brood mares.

9341. Would yon improve the breed in that way?—I don't know how they are bred. The mares I have sold to the tramway company, I have known a great many of them to turn out good brood mares, but those mares had more quality than the majority of tramway horses. The tramway horses generally are hairy-legged, but a good many of them are clean-legged animals with back-bone, and mares of that class, with good backs and loins, turn out good brood mares.

9342. The trams have a limit of price just the same as troopers?—Yes; they used to have £35, but they have reduced it to £27 now.

9343. What age would they take them at?—At all ages.

9344. Will they take them under four years old?—No, but any age over it.

9345. Will they take them at four?—No, not until five years old.

9346. Is the Belfast Farming Society taking steps to any extent to improve the breeding of harness horses, to encourage harness horses at their shows?—They never did much yet. I think the thing is altogether new since the new North-East Society—I don't know what is the new name—started, but they have not taken very much interest in the breeding of horses.

9347. But they have made great strides in the last year?—Yes; I think they are likely to be second to Dublin any way.

9348. Do you know where the big London jobmasters, like East and Wimbush, get their horses? Do they get their horses through dealers, or from the private breeders?—The majority of the London jobmasters used to get their colts in Ireland, buying them at three-year-old or less; but I don't think they get as many as they want now, and they are obliged to buy American horses. I know myself one of the principal jobmasters in London, and he buys nearly all his horses from my son-in-law in Edinburgh, and he is the largest importer from America in the three Kingdoms. He seldom brings over less than 300 or 400 at a time, and he serves the jobmasters in London. I don't think he has bought an Irish horse for the last two or three years, and he used to be a very big buyer in Ireland.

9349. He would buy them in Ireland if he could?—Well, he could get plenty, but he could not sell them.

9350. He could get them cheaper than in Ireland?—I don't know. If you get good American horses you have to pay a good price for them.

9351. Then, if those horses have to be brought from abroad, Ireland is losing a trade by not being able to produce these horses?—Certainly. I have repeatedly gone to a fair prepared to give a reasonable price for a hunter or other useful horse of any class, and I have repeatedly to leave buying very few, or perhaps none at all. I am often prepared to give more than they are worth, and could not get them.

9352. Do you buy any horses in America yourself?—No; my son has been in America buying, not for me but for my son-in-law. I have never bought any in America myself, but I have bought several in Scotland that have come direct from America.

9353. Do you think the importation of American horses into Scotland is increasing? How many are brought over in a month?—I could not give you the most remote idea. They are shipping them now all round the whole winter.

9354. Do you think the importation is falling off or the reverse?—I think there are more horses coming now than formerly.

9355. Admittedly a larger number is bought in Chicago?—Yes.

9356. There is a large weekly market there?—There is.

9357. In addition to the London jobmasters the large foreign jobmasters are buying in America also?—A lot.

9358. The Germans have been buying their mares here for a good many years?—They have.

9359. For twenty-five years?—They have.

9360. They buy them for cavalry purposes and breed from them afterwards?—I don't know. The majority of them are sold to officers for their own private use. They are principally bought to be sold to private people.

9361. Do you sell to Swiss, or German, or Italian dealers, or to the Government agents?—To the dealers. In fact I sold a lot the year before last. They were better than the trooper class, and I sold them at the price of hunters, for the Italian Government. They were intended for the Italian Government. The Government officials came over here, the colonel and veterinary surgeon and an interpreter, and they bought a lot of really good horses. They have been here several times, these same people.

9362. They were mostly bought for troopers?—Either chargers or troopers, but they were more than double the price usually paid for horses for such purposes.

9363. What price would they have to pay for them?—Up to £60 or £80 each.

9364. They were all bought for the Government?—Yes.

9365. You were talking of Mr. Oppenheim. He is one of the biggest dealers in the world?—Yes.

9366. What class of horses does he buy, riding or harness horses?—He does a very big trade in harness horses, in his own country's breed of horses. He sends a lot of them to London to different jobmasters, but he does not buy any harness horses here. He buys nothing but mares and very nice well-bred horses.

9367. Do you know what he does with these mares?—His principal trade is with private customers, who generally buy for their own use.

9368. You have heard it suggested, for one thing, that all owners of stallions should be obliged to take out a licence to insure the soundness of their animals. Do you approve of that?—It is a thing I never studied at all. I think a man who has a sound horse should have a certificate, or have it registered as a sound horse, but there are a great many horses in the country that should not be allowed to serve at all.

9369. Would you try to disqualify stallions from serving that were unsound?—Certainly. I would not have a roarer at service at all, nor a horse unsound in any way.

9370. Do you think the foreigners are particular as to the pedigrees. Do you think they look into pedigrees?—Unless with a thoroughbred, they are not particular. They buy according to appearance.

9371. CHAIRMAN.—What do you suggest should be done to protect the farmers, and to prevent them from sending their mares to inferior stallions?—I would suggest that some people should be appointed who would go round to the farmers who breed, and advise them not to breed from the bad mares that they breed from, because their time and their money is lost, both as regards the

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mares and the sires. I would be as particular about the one as the other.

9372. I would gather from you that you think that the average farmer is not a good enough judge to know the sire that is likely to be best suited for his mare?—A great many farmers do not know what is the right class of mare, or the right class of horse to breed from.

9373. And in that case it would not be sufficient that there should be a suitable stallion standing at a suitable price, for you think they would still go to the inferior stallion as it would be cheaper?—Well, I believe if they did not know, they would have neighbours who would advise them to go to the better horse.

9374. As a matter of fact it is the relative price that guides them in the matter?—I think so; to poor people who have not means, the price is the great inducement, and if there were a good horse at £3 and a very bad one at £1, I think they would take the cheaper horse.

9375. Do you sell many horses to the Government for remounts?—No, I don't. I have sold to the Government at times, but these were times when there was talk about war. I have sold to the commissariat and for artillery remounts as well, but I have never had a commission from the Government to supply remounts, although I could have got it I think if I applied.

9376. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Could you give us any information as to foreign buyers?—Well, there was an immense amount taken to Switzerland within the last ten years and a great many taken by Italy also. The Germans buy their own breed of horses direct from the farmers. They have no agents.

9377. I am speaking of the export from this country, you could not give us any idea as to the annual export?—I could not.

9378. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Johnson, you told us that a great number of horses were bought by the Italian Government, but of a superior class to the ordinary remounts, say a horse that would fetch from £60 to £80?—I think so.

9379. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—That is above the class I am dealing with, a lower class of horse. They were chiefly good colts?—Certainly.

9380. A good many of the best mares go to foreign buyers at prices from £60 to £100?—Yes. These are all trained horses that I mean.

9381. You don't refer to young colts four-year olds of a high class?—I should buy a good colt at any time.

9382. Where do they go?—To foreign dealers. Very few foreign dealers buy untrained colts. The best harness-like colts are brought and taken to London for the jobmasters there.

9383. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know, Mr. Johnson, whether some of the foreign Governments are now buying, as an experiment, troopers in Canada?—Well, I heard they were. They tried it but they don't like it. I know the Swiss people bought a lot, and the Italians too, but they did not like them.

9384. Was that from the States or was it from Canada?—I can't tell you.

9385. You have not heard recently that a good many horses were bought as an experiment from Canada?—I don't know whether they were bought as an experiment. The party I sold troopers to for the Swiss Government used to buy from me for a considerable time, but there was one year, instead of buying Irish horses, he went to America, and he is now getting a supply of Irish horses, as they did not like the American horses.

9386. Do you think the American export of horses is affecting the foreign trade as well as the trade with the London jobmasters?—I know several foreigners who used to buy horses here, and they are now living in Chicago, and they are regularly stationed there and buy horses for these people. I know one Belgian and one Frenchman who used to buy a lot of horses in Ireland, and they are now living in America.

9387. Living in America and buying there?—Yes.

9388. When you talk about selling the Italians horses at £60 or £80 each, were they chiefly mares or geldings?—They were not particular.

9389. They took either?—Either.

9390. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Do the Germans make any distinction between mares and geldings?—Yes; they would rather buy mares. They buy no horses except nice thoroughbreds or very well bred horses.

9391. I think it was the Swiss Government that you said one man was buying for. Was he buying as a dealer, or for the Government on their order? Was he buying on his own responsibility and reselling to the Government?—He bought on his own responsibility and resold to the Government.

9392. What was his name?—Block of Basle.

9393. He is not a Government agent?—He has an order from the Government, and he buys for them, and of course runs the risk as to whether they will take them or not.

9394. He buys as a dealer would?—Yes.

9395. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said your son-in-law deals very largely in American horses?—Yes.

9396. And your son buys for him in America?—Yes.

9397. Can you tell us how those horses are bred, generally speaking?—I don't know really. Some are beautiful looking horses, and some are beautifully bred horses, but out of a hundred perhaps you would not get one that would make a riding horse.

9398. They are all harness horses?—They are the best trained horses in the world for harness. They must be got by a thoroughbred horse, for they show a lot of quality. The majority of them have long thighs and crooky hocks, but a great many of them are well made with fine long fronts, and they are so well mouthed that immediately you put a pair together they go right off, and you have no trouble to train them at all.

9399. Mr. WRENCH.—Would it be possible to ascertain their breeding when they are put up for sale in Chicago?—It might be possible. They have the very best blood in England both for mares and horses out there.

9400. CHAIRMAN.—Has your son-in-law persons to buy for him?—He had two or three agents, but did not get on well with them; but now he has about a half dozen men who buy horses, and they bring them over and he buys the lot, the same as you would buy sheep. He selects as well as he can the good horses for which he could get a good price, and the middling horses he sells for whatever he can get.

9401. He makes no inquiries as to the breeding?—Never; I don't think he would think of such a thing.

9402. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Have you noticed anything in the make or shape of the American horse that you would take exception to?—As a rule they have peculiar hips, a very peculiar form.

9403. Is there anything about them that you would object to? Do you notice anything in the general run of them?—Yes; the majority of them are not deep of their heart, and they have long bare thighs and crooky hocks.

9404. Peculiar hips, and wanting in power in their second thighs?—Yes.

9405. CHAIRMAN.—Where are they landed?—Those I am speaking of are landed at Glasgow, but every week horses are landed in Liverpool and London. There is hardly a seaport of any consequence where they are not landing American horses.

9406. What is the freight from Chicago to Liverpool?—From Chicago to Liverpool is £6 now; it used to be about £12. I may say I bought a horse just landed from Chicago; he was just such a horse as you would buy in Clonmel or the county of Cork, made all over like an Irish hunter, a four-year-old. I gave nearly £100 for him. I sold him to a dealer outside London, and he showed him at the Hunters' Show, and got first prize for him in the four-year-old class.

He sold him to a man that shows horses all round the country in England, and in every place he was shown he got first prize. No one could know that he was not an Irish horse. I don't know, but perhaps he was shown as an Irish horse.

9407. Mr. WRENCH.—You never heard his pedigree after he was shown?—No.

9408. CHAIRMAN.—What have you to say as to the cost of transportation from Chicago to England?—We pay from the county Cork to Belfast exactly double what it used to be ten years ago, and I know that from New York and Chicago it is half what it used to be at that time.

9409. The price has gone up at home for carriage, and it has gone down abroad?—It has. Then I know the railway companies are bound to clean and disinfect their wagons for cattle, but I don't know how it is they are not bound to cleanse their boxes for horses, and it is very seldom a horse gets out of any of their boxes without some infection.

9410. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you mean in Ireland?—Yes; they never think of cleaning or disinfecting their boxes for horses. I have lost over £1,000 through horses taking influenza and going wrong of their wind. We bring our middling horses in wagons, and they are far safer and sounder than the better class of horses, who are put in the boxes, as they do not take influenza or some cold or disease.

9411. What does it cost to take a horse from Cork to Belfast?—If you take a single horse in a box, £5; and if we bring six in a wagon it is £3 a horse.

9412. And supposing you had to take a horse from Cork to Glasgow?—In the boat from Cork to Glasgow it would be £1, and 2*s.* 6*d.* more pays harbour dues and all.

9413. CHAIRMAN.—Is there any other suggestion that you have to make to the Commission?—The only suggestion that I would think of making would be to try and induce the farmers to breed from a better class of mares, and to keep them from taking the service of a bad horse. If they would breed from a good horse out of a good mare, they would be sure to get good produce. That is a thing that everyone knows. And if we could induce them to keep their mares by giving them a fee or an inducement, I think it would be a good job.

9414. I think you said that you yourself rather approved of breeding from two-year-old fillies?—The reason I would suggest that is that the mare is not too young to have a foal at three year old, and it does not curtail their growth or make them lose their value; and when they are six year old, supposing she has had two foals, and missed from five to six, she is worth as much as if she never had a foal, and the farmer in the meantime has the produce, which I consider is a great benefit and profit to him.

Mr. THOMAS DONOVAN, Cork, examined.

9415. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the county Cork?—Yes.

9416. And you are engaged in dealing in horses?—Yes.

9417. Have you been engaged in that business for a length of time?—Yes, as long as I can recollect.

9418. What class of horses do you generally deal in?—Hunters principally. I sell a great many chargers. I buy a good harness horse occasionally, but not often.

9419. How do you buy your horses; in the fairs, or from the breeders personally, or how?—Formerly I bought principally at fairs; but latterly I find I cannot get what I want at the fairs. The majority sell now at their own houses. Railway travelling has considerably improved lately, and people can come from England; in fact, I believe I get as much opposition now from a man living in London as from a man living in Ireland. You can leave London at 8.20 and go to any part of Ireland and get back again the next day.

9420. Do you sell your horses principally in Ireland or in England?—Principally in England. All more or less to go to England. I would be glad to sell them at home to go to England; but I have to take them over.

9421. Do you generally buy made hunters?—Yes; but I am always anxious to buy a young one that would grow to a hunter. I take a great fancy in breeding a good three-year-old that would get a four-year-old prize in Dublin.

9422. Do you find the price you have to pay for this class of horse about the same or are they becoming more expensive?—High-class horses are just as valuable now as ever they were.

9423. You pay the same and get the same?—I am sorry to say I don't get as much as I did.

9424. You have to pay as much though?—Yes, and I find they are dearer in Ireland than in England; but the influx of horses into England from all parts is so great that when you go into an auction—and there are auctions every day—while you only see an odd one you want in Ireland, you see twenty in England to choose from. The present customer finds it hard to buy a horse in Ireland.

9425. You buy all over the South?—I do.

9426. And in the North?—No; I never go beyond Mullingar or Ballinasloe.

9427. Do you think the South produces as many good hunters as formerly?—Yes, and more.

9428. And of as good quality?—Quite as good quality. The worst of it is the majority of the good colts are bought by East and Wimbush. East comes frequently to Ireland, and Wimbush always in the summer. He will only buy three-year olds unbroken, and he buys regardless of cost. The worst of his colts will make a hunter.

9429. Where does he buy?—In Limerick, Clare, and Cork principally. He buys from dealers who collect them for him, and a great many from graziers in Limerick, who buy them in the county Kerry as two year olds and sell to him as three year olds. He buys at an average price of £100, and they find that pays them far better than to keep them up to five and hunt them and get half the money.

9430. What does Wimbush buy for?—For carriage horses.

9431. The same class as you buy for hunters?—Oh, yes.

9432. Do you think the farmers about you, and in the South generally, pay as much attention as formerly to horse-breeding?—Farmers in the South pay a great deal more attention to horse-breeding than farmers throughout Ireland generally. They are very fond of it, but unfortunately in West Cork, whether they attempt it or not, their efforts are useless, because they have no sires.

9433. No sires?—They have plenty, but they are quite enough to poison the district. I was not in Bandon for some time, though it is only twenty miles from Cork, until the 4th of August last, and it was deplorable to see the horses there. It would be a great boon to their owners if they were all destroyed. There is nothing more difficult to sell than an unsaleable horse

9434. Is it true as has been said here that, though the price of carriage horses and hunters has kept up, the price of the inferior horse has gone down?—The medium class harness horse is considerably lower in consequence of the influx of foreigners, but they have in no way interfered with the value of hunters. I was in Leicester during the month of December, and I think I am safe in saying there were not ten horses in any hunting field I attended except Irish horses.

9435. Are you particular as to the pedigree when

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buying a horse or are you content to judge by the appearance and shape?—The first question is the pedigree of the horse you are buying.

9436. Can you rely on the pedigrees given you?—I am very glad to say I seldom get a false pedigree. I may tell you I have got wrong pedigrees, but it is the exception.

9437. You have spoken about the bad quality of the sires in one particular district. Generally speaking, do you think the county is well supplied with suitable sires?—The district from Limerick Junction to Cork is well supplied, but when you get from Cork to the West it is in a deplorable state. I think the Government sent one horse that was worth sending for one season—a horse called "York"; he stood, I think, at Dunmanway; at the present moment, Sir John Arnott, who has purchased the Duke of Devonshire's property, is starting a stud for his tenants; there is no part of Ireland so badly off for sires as the west of Cork, and the same remark might apply to the eastern portion of the county Cork, the Youghal and Waterford side.

9438. What about the quality of mares they breed from?—My opinion is that, if possible, you would want to effect a great improvement in the mares, but the difficulty is how to do it. I, for one, think the way the mare shows are held is a mockery; the system is a total failure. I attended a few in Cork, and I must say if there were only mares of the description I saw in the south of Ireland we could not produce hunters at all; it is ridiculous giving a lot of miserable prizes; I would only give three prizes, and then any mare exhibiting will exhibit in the hope of getting the first prize. I would give a first prize of £30; a second prize of £20; and £10 to the third, that is, if I had sufficient means to give it, and then the farmers instead of selling their good mares would be looking forward to this first prize.

9439. Do you approve of breeding from a two-year-old filly?—I do not; I have frequently bought hunters that had foals when they were young, and when I had the good luck or the misfortune of riding them myself I found they were very far from being as good as those that never had a foal. I have heard it stated that it doesn't do them harm, but I am convinced it does; even in selling the animals if they have the sign of having been at stud it detracts from their value.

9440. Have you sold to any foreign government?—I cannot say, I have sold a great many horses to foreigners.

9441. Do you know at all whether of late years there has been a great demand on the part of foreign governments for Irish mares?—I don't think it is confined to late years at all; as long as I can recollect they are always anxious for buying good mares and are yet.

9442. Have you any opinion about breeding from half-bred sires—I mean horses with two or three strains of thoroughbred?—I have a strong opinion on the subject, but at the same time I would be slow in doing away with all half-bred horses. I certainly would not give one penny of government funds towards subsidising them.

9443. You prefer the thoroughbred?—Yes; though I have known some good half-bred sires that have been very useful—these half-breds that are little short of thoroughbreds—I think I got a horse from you, Lord Rathdonnell, got by "Harkaway," he won the Pembroke Cup in 1894; a very good horse

9444. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Yes, you are right.

Witness.—But it is the exception that proves the rule; he was as good a horse as a man would want to look at.

9445. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know the western portion of the county of Cork in the congested districts?—I know a good deal of the west of Cork, but I could not define which part comes under the head of congested. I think it is all congested.

9446. Do you know anything of the effect that the action of the Congested Districts Board scheme has had in those parts of the country on the breed of horses?—I cannot say that I do. I think they have taken no action in the county Cork. I am not aware that they have.

9447. Do you ever come across horses out of Connemara ponies by thoroughbreds or horses with a good strain of the Connemara pony in them?—I consider the Connemara and Kerry pony are very nearly the same pattern, and I have seen an extraordinary good hunter got by a horse called "Applause," out of a Kerry pony, and he was well up to sixteen stone.

9448. What size was he?—Sixteen hands. I have seen a great many extraordinary good hunters got out of very small mares by thoroughbreds.

9449. Have you any knowledge of the Kerry ponies, have you dealt in them at all?—No; but I have seen some very good polo ponies bred in Kerry.

9450. Do they come from Connemara or Kerry to your part of the country?—No; I saw a large drove yesterday in Clonmel. There was a fair there, and they were driven together like a flock of sheep.

9451. Where did they come from?—I would not say they came from Connemara. I was curious to know and looked at them particularly, but I could not tell where they came from; they were a nondescript lot, not worth their travelling expenses. Those unfortunate fellows who deal in them feed them along the road, and drive them from place to place until sold, the buyer having his choice out of the drove. Whatever district they come from you never will be able to assist them; it is waste of money to be trying to breed horses like that.

9452. We had it in evidence that the breed of Kerry pony had deteriorated?—I would not be surprised. I am sure whoever stated that was accurate. I frequently visited Kerry and bought some of the best hunters I ever bought in my life there. A horse bred in Kerry won the National two years running, and was placed fourth another year, a horse called "Liberator," bred in the extreme west. There were some very good sires in Kerry, and their produce was purchased in Castleisland, and resold at the age of three years to Wimbush generally. I bought a good many that were bred in Kerry, very good ones.

9453. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You said that in these shows you would advocate an alteration in the prize list, and give only three substantial prizes in preference to a great number?—Yes.

9454. That would help the larger farmer, but would it, in your opinion, tend to help the smaller farmer?—I am certain it would. I find that the smaller the farmer is the more time he has to devote to horse-breeding; the larger farmer stocks his farm with cattle, the smaller farmer takes a keen interest in horses.

9455. You think it would work better than spending the same amount of money over a larger number of prizes that are not so competitive?—The present prizes are about £2 each, for a larger number. It looks like doling out-door relief to a pauper instead of giving him something he could call his own; it is given broadcast, and as I am on the subject, I may say, having given these prizes, I would advocate having proper judges appointed—I have seen myself a mare that produced the first yearly prize at the Cork Show that didn't even get one of these service premiums—I don't think it is fair to appoint local gentlemen as judges, because you will find probably that their tenants have produced some of the animals—I would have independent judges.

9456. You mentioned that East and Wimbush bought a large number of horses between Limerick and Cork every year?—Yes.

9457. And that they give a good price for them?—Yes.

9458. How are those horses bred?—All by thoroughbred sires.

9459. Therefore you would advocate having nothing but thoroughbred sires if you were able to manage it?—Yes, if the Government would only give sufficient money, my suggestion would be not to subsidise the present sires, but to buy the best they could get, and give them to the farmers at a nominal fee say five shillings each. At the present moment, I expect they will do something: they would not think of troubling you, gentlemen, for the paltry sum they are giving now—I think £3,400 a year for horses: If they are inclined to give no more, it would be better if they capitalised it for ten years. It would amount to about £35,000, and with that they could buy a certain number of valuable sires, which would do more good than all the agitation they are going on with for the last ten years.

9460. Have you seen any or had any experience of the horses taken down to the congested districts by the Congested Districts Board?—No.

9461. But from what you hear of them are they horses that you think will be a permanent benefit?—From what I hear of them and what everybody says must be true, they are a curse to the country—the unfortunate people will not find out the real grievance until they try to realize cash for them.

9462. You think they will destroy the prestige the Irish hunter now holds?—I would not like to say that—I earnestly hope they will not—I am in hopes they will be done away with; it is the only thing we can hold our own in. I have already stated that horses are much dearer in Ireland than in England, but at the same time it is owing to the high character of the Irish hunter that we can get more for him than any other horse.

9463. If you alter that you lose that prestige?—Yes, you lose the whole thing.

9464. And if you continue to use even in the congested districts the stallions brought over at present will you lose that?—No doubt they will do harm, because they won't be saleable, and they will have to spread, fellows won't shoot them, and some unfortunate fellow is bound to breed from those after.

9465. Lord ASHTOWN.—You would like the Government to buy sires and station them about the country?—Yes.

9466.—Do you mean the Government should keep them in their own possession?—I certainly think they should have them kept in their own possession.

9467. You mean to form Government studs?—Well, that is a matter of detail; you could not well form a Government stud, because you would have to distribute the stallions in various districts, they could hardly give them to a man and pay him so much a year. I am of opinion, if the Government take any step at all, they should buy a better class of sire than the present horses that are registered.

9468. You think they are not good enough?—They might be better. "Red Prince II.," for instance, is a horse that would be worth buying; he is in the market now.

9469. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you think there are more good sires in Ireland at the present moment than before, or do you think they are worse than they were?—I think they are considerably increased; I know in our district and all over Tipperary—I have great experience in the South, from Dublin on—there are more good thoroughbred sires than there were formerly.

9470. You say the class of thoroughbred horses you would like to see should be better than at present?—Yes, if possible.

9471. It might be inferred from that that you do not like any of the horses in Ireland?—I would not go so far, there are a great many I would approve of, but a great many others I would have shot—notwithstanding that they are registered by the Royal Dublin Society.

9472. Do you think the sires have deteriorated?—I would rather not name any horse, but I could name some exceptions, good ones, and some very bad ones. There was a great temptation a few years ago when you were giving so much a year for thoroughbreds, lots of fellows ran off to Newmarket and other places, and thought anything good enough so long as it was in the stud book; some of these beggars should never have been registered.

9473. Do you think people have found that out?—The farmers of Ireland are slow but they find it out when they come to realize the produce.

9474. Then they won't send to those sires again?—If you are living in a remote district and have only one horse near you, beggars can hardly be choosers.

9474A. You are a member of the Cork Agricultural Society?—Yes.

9475. Did that society pass a strong resolution against the introduction of the Hackney?—Yes.

9476. Did you approve of that?—I approved of the resolution.

9477. Colonel St. QUINTIN—You told us that there are as many high-class hunters bred now as formerly, is the demand equal, or is it as great or less?—The demand is as great as ever for high class hunters, that is my opinion.

9478. More or less, could you sell more now if you could get them?—My sales generally average the same number every year.

9479. Can you tell me anything about a subject I am anxious to find out something about—where do all the black horses go to. You say East and Wimbush buy as three-year olds high-class horses for harness—are they not anxious to get hold of the blacks?—They prefer, what we all prefer, I expect, a black brown. A black horse is not at all as attractive as a dark brown.

9480. Where do the black horses go to?—If you can only tell me where they come from first, colonel.

9481. You are quite right, but there are a few about that are above my price, and I am told they are bought by big dealers in England at prices from £70 to £100?—I would not say that. Whenever I see a black horse I buy it myself. I sell a great many black chargers to the Guards, and I find they are very hard to get, just as difficult as a white magpie.

9482. What age do you buy at?—Four years and upwards.

9483. You don't buy at three?—No, a man who has a good colt scarcely shows him at three, that is if he is a high-class colt. The only people who trade in three-year-olds are those people who train them, such as East and Wimbush. If they have been at all tampered with they don't like them. Englishmen are better drivers than Irishmen.

9484. Is it not a fact that the best bred horses now never find their way to the fairs, that they are marked down by yourself and other dealers?—I am glad you mentioned that subject. The last witness stated they are very hard to find in Ireland. Certainly they are when a man only goes to fairs, because a man that has a good horse need not send him outside his own place, except to a show. Lord Rathdonnell referred to the Cork Agricultural Society, I am glad to say we have a show only second to Dublin, and there were some good four year old horses shown there. It may seem like a proud boast to say that the horses that won in Cork, and some that didn't win, cleared the board in Dublin. I had a horse that got first prize in Cork and got first prize here, and he was the only thoroughbred horse that ever obtained first prize in the four-year-old class in Dublin. The horse that got third prize in Cork got the champion prize in Dublin. In fact every horse that was commended in Cork got first, or something like it, in Dublin. Mr. Johnston stated that horses were scarcer. They are if a man doesn't go where

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they are. They come to the Dublin Show. I recollect when there were about 600 horses shown, now it is up to 1,300, and last year one man bought forty-one out of the Show, Mr. Hames, of Leicester. But even if a farmer doesn't get rid of a horse at his own house, and brings it to the fair, he never brings it to the fair ground, he brings it to the stable. You will have to buy a horse the day before the fair. All the good horses are picked up the day before, even if it is a Sunday.

9485. You go about the fairs a good deal, and do you find that if there are a large number of highly-bred small animals wanting in bone and substance there are quite a sufficient number of bone and substance, but so underbred and mis-shapen that they are practically useless for anything but the commonest work?—Yes; some are well represented in quantity and deficient in quality.

9486. Though you don't touch the trooper, you may know something about them. In these fairs there is a great amount of unsoundness. A great many animals sold at much higher prices a month or two before and cast for wind, are offered for troopers. Hence the increase in the unsoundness?—I had some experience in troopers; I mounted several regiments, and I found I got some good-looking sires and their wind went wrong. Take the last days of these big fairs, like Cahirmee or Ballinasloe, and you see 300 or 400 horses, and there is hardly a sound horse amongst them. They are good-looking animals, and if they had been passed by a veterinary surgeon would have brought £300 or £400 absolutely. It has been said that the last days at Ballinasloe and Cahirmee were made for veterinary surgeons. They see these horses, quite good-looking, take them to a veterinary surgeon, pay a guinea, and the partnership is dissolved at once. I heard a veterinary surgeon say he got nine guineas out of one horse during the fair.

9487. Which would you prefer for troopers—a well-bred light-actioned horse, or a large-boned, less well-bred clumsier animal?—I would not have an underbred for a trooper at all. He has a lot of work to do, and if you get him underbred he is a failure.

9488. Mr. WRENCH.—You were asked about the black horse. Can you say where the grey horses come from?—A great many from the South. There was an old breed of horses there. They are descended from a horse called "Arthur," and some of the descendants are still there. The fact is, they call every grey horse a descendant of "Arthur."

9489. Is it more difficult to buy a good grey horse now than it used to be?—I cannot say it is; it is a colour that is never sought for.

9490. I was thinking of the Scots Greys?—They are wonderfully well mounted, and by some means the greys seem to last for a lifetime.

9491. They are said all to come from Ireland?—I sold a very good grey to Major Hippesley, the Adjutant, and he was bred near Clonmel.

9492. Your trade is chiefly in hunters and chargers?—Yes.

9493. Nearly altogether in riding horses?—Yes.

9494. And you generally buy the best horse you can find?—Yes.

9495. What class of man do you buy from—what size are their farms?—I cannot state, like the last witness, that I buy direct from the breeder. I never buy young horses. I buy them from men who hunt them a season or so.

9496. What age do you generally buy at?—Generally at five.

9497. Do you buy them younger than four?—Very seldom.

9498. You don't sell under five?—I sell them at four.

9499. This time of the year?—At any time.

9500. Do you find it easy to sell hunters at four years?—No; very hard. They won't buy them in England.

9501. They only buy five-year-olds?—That is so.

9502. The majority of the farmers who have an opportunity of breaking them sell them out of the halter, and, as the last witness said, they go to the North and are fed like oxen?—When they are brought out they are useless for six months until that condition wastes off; in the South they are kept and hunted.

9503. You find a great disadvantage in a mare bred from at two years old?—I do.

9504. Have you had any experience of a mare that had not been put to a horse until three years old; does it make the same difference with her?—I can hardly define whether the animals I refer to were sent at two or three years; but if they had a foal, I have had nearly as much experience in hunting as dealing, I find they were not as good animals as others in the long run.

9504A. I think you said you would not give any Government money to encourage half-bred sires?—I would not.

9505. You would except "Mackintosh" or "May Boy"?—Yes. Any horse that claimed to be a thoroughbred. "May Boy" is as good a sire as you could get.

9506. But below that class of horse you would not go?—I would not.

9507. What would you do for the farmers who cannot breed horses—these horses that you say are rubbish—what sire would you give them—would you encourage any sire but the thoroughbred?—I would not, unless you want to perpetuate that rubbish. If you want to get rid of it you must get rid of the sires, and the only way of doing that is you cannot compel a man to send his mare to any one horse instead of another, but he is sure to send him to the best when he gets it at a small fee.

9508. Would you approve of encouraging the Clydesdale?—No.

9509. Or a cart horse?—Except for cart purposes alone.

9510. If they are encouraged in a neighbourhood how are you going to keep out the blood?—You cannot keep it out if you fetch it in.

9511. Is there a class for cart horses in the Cork Show?—Just at present there is; but the prize is so small that only two animals were shown last year.

9512. Do you know there are a good many Clydesdale and half-bred Clydesdale stallions standing in Cork?—There are some—a few—not half so many as twelve years ago. When the trade was brisk, there was a rush made for them and they got sick of it—hence the great crowd of bad horses in the Bandon district.

9513. Would you be surprised if there were nearly a third of the stallions in Cork cart horses or half-bred cart horses?—I would be surprised.

9514. But suppose that people are breeding from their mares and find they are breeding too fine from a thoroughbred horse, how would you correct that?—I will give you a case in point which might astonish you. I bought a horse from Mr. O'Connell, of Fethard, by "Regulator" out of an Arthur mare two years ago; and three years ago I bought a horse out of the same mare by "Reliable." This horse is up to 16 stone. I hunted him myself, and sold him in Leicester. I put him among a lot with a reserve against him of £350, which I got on the following Monday. I hold that breeding from inferior horses doesn't give more bone, but gives an appearance of more bone.

9515. You think thoroughbreds can be found to suit any mares?—If you are willing to pay.

9516. And I think you suggested a little way of making a nest-egg of £35,000?—If what the Government give was capitalized for ten years that would make up a respectable amount.

9517. How many horses do you think you could buy for £35,000?—You could not get more than 70

of the horses I mean. The horse I spoke of would cost a thousand pounds to begin with.

9518. You cannot tell how many horses there are in Ireland like "Red Prince"? There is a horse called "Spahi," a good horse.

9519. There are not many of them?—No; if there were they would not be so dear.

9520. You would not get "Red Prince" for £500?—No; I say that would cost £1,000.

9521. Have you thought at all how you could help these men who breed the rubbish of the fairs to breed better mares?—If you give a show of mares in every district, and have judges—not local judges, but capable judges—sent there, these farmers, instead of selling their mares at £50 and £60, would be looking forward to this prize. I would like to have a class with a foal at foot, and I would give three prizes of £30, £20, and £10.

9522. That won't go very far?—Nearly as far as your present miserable prizes, and the man that would be last would want to be first.

9523. Would you let the same mare win a first prize two years running?—No: I would let the second prize mare show next year; it is not often an animal wins twice.

9524. Do you think stallion owners ought to be compelled to take out a licence?—I do.

9525. You approve of that?—I do.

9526. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know at all whether the small farmers breed many of this class of horse you have been talking about in Cork?—Yes, a great many.

9527. And do you see any reason why a man, because he is a small farmer, should not breed good horses?—Nothing in the world to prevent him, as I said already. Some of the best hunters I ever bought were bred by small farmers. I know one man who has thirty acres of land.

9528. You told us what you think might be done in the way of encouraging them to keep their mares, and you told us that if the Government did anything in the way of supplying stallions, that they ought to supply suitable thoroughbreds at a low fee?—Yes, that would have the effect of clearing away this superfluity of rubbish you see at present in every fair.

9529. Do you think the average farmer capable of selecting the most suitable stallion?—I have heard lots of people say they are not, but my opinion is that they know too much; whenever I am buying from them, they never ask less than the value. I am certain they are capable of protecting themselves. If you produce the material they will avail themselves of it.

9530. The fees being equal, they are quite capable of selecting a suitable stallion?—There is no doubt of that at all.

9531. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say there is no reason why the small farmer should not breed a good horse—would you qualify that by saying he ought to have a suitable mare to breed from?—Yes.

9532. Do Messrs. East & Wimbush buy fillies as well as colts?—Not one.

9533. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Can you tell me where most of the good mares go to—they are seldom found in the hunting stables of England; the geldings seem to be chiefly taken as hunters?—You are quite right.

9534. And there is a great export of the high class hunter mares from here?—I really think the majority—well, I would not say the majority—go to Germany, but all the foreigners are most anxious to buy the mares. As you wisely remarked, you will see very few hunting mares in England.

9535. Don't you know a great portion go to Germany?—I really think so.

9536. Mr. WRENCH.—When you talk of a small farmer you allude to a man who would have 30 acres?—I consider a man under 100 acres is a small farmer. I have bought horses from men who had under 30 acres, but very few.

9537. But the chief men who breed horses have more than 30 acres?—Yes, and 200 acres. I think the farmers in the South average between 100 and 200 acres each.

9538. That is in the districts where they breed good horses?—Yes.

9539. But when you go to the West it is different?—Oh, yes; the farmers hold smaller holdings.

9540. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything you would like to say about the fairs—about the accommodation?—They are not held in proper fields; in a great many districts you have no fields at all. The extraordinary thing about that is that if these fairs are held in the streets it is almost impossible to get the inhabitants to agree to have them shifted to a proper field, because they drive a better trade in the way of whiskey. In Limerick there is a great row going on for three years. They compelled the horses to leave the streets and go into the fair field. In my opinion that has ruined the fair. The fair field is a mile out of the town. You don't like going out too early lest you might miss something in the stables, and the police are so mighty particular in that respect they will summon you if they see you walk a horse in the street—the owner, not the buyer. It has absolutely ruined the fair. Something similar has occurred in Ennis with regard to the Spancil Hill fair. They started a fair in Ennis, and it ruined Spancil Hill. It was worth going to at one time.

Sir OWEN R. SLACKE, C.B., examined.

9542. CHAIRMAN.—You are a Divisional Commissioner of Police at present, are you not?—Yes.

9543. What districts are under your supervision?—The whole of Ulster, and the counties of Meath and Louth—eleven counties.

9544. You are residing in Dundalk?—Dundalk is my headquarters.

9545. You have had a large experience in horse breeding throughout Ireland generally?—Yes; I have had a good deal of experience. For about eighteen years I lived in the South of Ireland after I left the service, and I used to keep a great number of horses then and bred a certain number. I always took a very great interest in the subject, for the last six years I have been in the North. I have observed what they do in the counties with which I am connected.

9546. Would it be convenient to you to divide your experience?—My latter experience is what I would prefer to speak to you about and what I am connected with now, though I am quite willing to answer any questions you may put to me regarding the South.

9547. Take the North. What is your experience of it now?—The counties under me differ very considerably in the manner in which they breed their horses. Taking the North of Ireland generally they breed horses more for general utility than for any other purpose. They breed very few hunters in the North, and when you go into districts like Donegal, where they are very poor, the breeding is of a different description altogether. Then Meath and Louth, which you cannot say belong to the North exactly, are very different. In Meath I consider they breed the best horses in Ireland. The land is suited to it, the farmers are substantial, and they understand it. The big graziers there are very good judges of horses, and they make a regular business of it. In the part of the county Louth adjoining Meath they also breed pretty well, but in the county Louth as you go nearer to the county Armagh you get into

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a kind of horses which are more for farm purposes, and for harness and general utility.

9548. And as to these harness horses and general utility horses I gather from you that that part of the country is not suitable to produce the higher class of hunter and carriage horse?—I think that parts of the country are suitable for breeding, but that the people do not go in for it: they don't understand breeding: they have not got the trade for the same class of horses that they have in Meath or in the South of Ireland. Of course it is a great agricultural country, and a farmer goes in greatly for the breeding of horses for farm purposes, and if he does not want them for that he can always dispose of a big horse as a dray horse for a brewery. They breed an immense number of that description in the North. I should say in Louth, Armagh, parts of Down, about Belfast specially, and in parts of Antrim they breed a great deal of that kind of horse. In other counties, like Monaghan and Cavan, they breed a small and an inferior kind—generally underbred horses, but very few hunters.

9549. How are these dray horses bred?—The dray horses are generally bred from Clydesdale or Shire stallions.

9550. From what class of mares?—From very much the same class of mare with Clydesdale or Shire blood. They are a very different sort from what used to be bred from in the South—a large and rather common looking mare.

9551. Are you acquainted with the western seaboard at all?—Donegal—yes, very well.

9552. What do they produce there?—I think they breed more for their own use than anything else, the work there is very light. It is generally light cart work and their horses are used to carry people on their backs to fairs and markets; their selling is mostly among themselves. There are whole parishes in Donegal where there is not such a thing as plough, and of course they don't want horses very much in those districts, except for cart work, and that is all light cart work. That is in Donegal as it is along the sea-coast—the congested districts part. Of course there are parts of Donegal where there are very large farms, and very good land, and there they go in much for the agriculture horse.

9553. And the smaller class of horse—the general utility horse—is there as much demand for that as formerly? Is it a profitable kind of horse to breed?—Well, no; I don't think it is a profitable kind of horse. They generally sell among themselves, but of course if a horse is a good looking harness hack they can sell it; but it is not a district that dealers go to to buy. They are all local men—the smaller people that buy among themselves. In Donegal they sell a good deal of horses quite young as foals before they are a year old.

9554. What becomes of them?—I think they are bought and taken out of the country as harness hacks; some larger farmers buy them and train them, and keep them, and sell them as harness hacks, but I don't think there is a very great trade in that.

9555. Are there not a very considerable number of horses bred in the North and sold out of the country as harness horses?—A great number. I suppose one of the largest fairs in Ireland—the largest monthly fair—is held in the North of Ireland, in Moy. There all classes of horses are bought; but the hunters you will find in the North all come from the South of Ireland and the West. A great number of harness horses are sold there. It is very much the custom of a certain class of dealers—and there are a great number of dealers in the North of Ireland—to go to the South, and bring up two-year olds and let them out or sell them to the farmers who keep them for a year and work them on their farms, and then make them up and sell them at Moy. There is a great trade in that.

9556. Buying these two year olds?—Yes; and they sell them as three or four year olds at Moy.

9557. For mostly harness purposes?—Harness purposes. They sell some as hunters; but their experience as hunters cannot be very great considering there is no hunting in that country.

9558. Our business being to inquire into the question of horse-breeding with a possible view to its improvement, what would you suggest as regards the North?—Do you mean as regards the North generally?

9559. Or divide it into any portions you find convenient?—Of course, I think in all breeding the first thing to do is to get at the stallions, because it is the bad stallions that produce bad mares; and I think the first consideration would be to put a check upon bad stallions being allowed to ply through the country for hire. Do you mean the kind of horse?

9560. I mean would you rather turn their attention to improve the breed of carriage horses or trying to induce them to breed hunters?—I would always try to induce the farmer to breed as well bred a horse as possible, because they certainly pay the best. Taking my experience in the South, they were nearly always bred in the former days in the South from thoroughbred sires for every purpose, and, taking it all round, they certainly answered the best. I would rather see thoroughbred sires imported into the country and used in the country than any others.

9561. Even in the North?—Even in the North. That is, providing that they are the right sort. At the same time I think that for purely agricultural purposes you would require a heavy class of horse, the same as they use in England. I think you would require horses like Shires or Clydesdales or something of that sort for agricultural purposes. But I think that that is a perfectly distinct thing, and that anyone who is dealing in horses, can see what it is they are buying, that the stamp is there. I don't think you could get—at least it would be very exceptional if you could get a dray horse—and there is a great trade in this kind of horse—by a thoroughbred horse. They are two distinct things. For harness horses of a superior class in any part of the country I would prefer a thoroughbred sire, but for agricultural purposes and heavy work I think you could not do better than have a Shire horse. I think you would require them in these cases.

9562. As regards thoroughbred sires, is the country pretty well supplied with them?—Yes, it is. I have got returns from the counties that are under me.

9563. Giving the stallions?—Giving the stallions. I have a nominal return of them. I find that in the eleven counties which constitute my bailiwick that there are 161 thoroughbred sires. (I can give them by counties which perhaps would be rather interesting afterwards to show the different counties in which they are located.) There are 156 half-breds, 59 Hackneys (exclusive of the five belonging to the Congested Districts Board), 23 Shires, 139 Clydesdales, and 84 of other breeds, that is, generally rough draught horses that people scarcely know how they are bred at all except that they are stallions. There are a good number of these in the country.

9564. Except the thoroughbreds and the half-breds, the Clydesdales are the largest?—The thoroughbred is the largest. There are 161 thoroughbreds. Then taking these again by counties. In Antrim there are eighteen thoroughbreds and ten half-breds. I can give you a copy of this return if it is any use.

9565. You can put it in afterwards. (*Witness*).—I gave a copy to Mr. Neville, this is only a rough copy that I have myself. In Meath there are forty-one thoroughbred horses; the next largest county is Down with twenty-six thoroughbreds

9566. Do you suppose the supply of stallions has naturally suited itself to the local demand. I mean the kind of stallion bred?—Yes; I think that they are, but I should rather like to see an improvement. By the "kind" I suppose you mean thoroughbred or a half-bred.

9567. Thoroughbreds, half-breds, Clydesdales, or whatever they may be?—Yes; I think that in some

of the counties they are pretty well suited; but I think that in all the counties there is a great number of stallions, and it would be a great deal better if they were not allowed to ply for hire. It will be observed that there are a great number of half-bred horses here. I think that some of them, as far as I have been able to ascertain, are very good useful horses, but I think that a good number of the others would be much better if they were out of the way.

9568. You don't object to the half-bred provided——?—No; for some of the districts I don't object to a half-bred horse; I think that they very often produce a very useful animal. In the South of Ireland I have observed that some half-breds produced quite as good hunters as some of the thoroughbreds, but, of course, they were exceptional. I prefer, for all purposes, if they could be got, good thoroughbreds; but next to that I think that a well bred half-bred horse. Do you understand what I mean.

9569. Quite so?—(*Witness*).—It is more useful to the farmer class than some of the weedy thoroughbreds that are in the country.

9570. Now as to mares in these districts in the North?—Well, the mares differ of course very considerably. In a county like Meath there are some excellent brood mares. I was judging at the last Meath Horse Show, and I was struck with the stamp of mare and with the number that was exhibited; of course, that is a horse-breeding county. In a great number of other places they really breed from any kind of mare that they happen to have. Of course the small farmer in those counties is no judge whatever of a horse, if he had a good mare he would not know it, and anything would induce him to part with her; he would never think of keeping her; if he had one nor would it pay him. It is different with the larger class of farmers; especially in counties where horse-breeding is looked after, and where shows are held. I have seen a decided improvement in the mares, they are selected with a great deal more care than in places where there is no kind of supervision at all.

9571. And you think the Royal Dublin Society scheme has worked well?—I think it is working well, as far as it goes, but I think it wants to be better known or better ventilated through the country. Now, for instance, take the registration of stallions. In the county Down there are twenty-six thoroughbreds, and of those there are only seven registered. That shows it is not properly understood otherwise the people would register. We cannot suppose these other horses are horses that would not pass for registration.

9572. I hope not?—*Witness.*—I hope not. In Antrim there are eighteen thoroughbreds, and only seven of those are registered. In Londonderry where there are eleven thoroughbreds there are none at all registered. In Meath where the thing is better understood out of forty-one thoroughbreds there are twenty-two registered. I mention this registration because it is the only record we have of how the Dublin Society is working. In Tyrone there are only two sires registered out of eleven. I gather from that that in a great number of those other counties there is no person to work it up, to bring before the people the advantages of registering their sires or having shows.

9573. Do you think the system of registration should be carried further—to the extent that stallions ought to be licensed?—Yes, I am very strongly of opinion about that. One of the first suggestions I should make is that all stallions that are let out for public hire should be obliged to have a licence. I should make it compulsory.

9574. So as to weed out the unsound and unsuitable animals?—Yes; the licence to be granted after proper inspection, and the animal passed free from all hereditary disease by an approved veterinary surgeon. Whether that should be done under the Royal Dublin Society or whether it should be done under any other scheme that might be brought forward in future, would be a matter of detail. The next thing to have should be, I think, compulsory licensing. I don't see any very great hardships in it either, considering that it is for the public use. If a man is plying in any other trade—or at least in a great number of other trades—he is obliged to have a licence. An auctioneer cannot sell without a licence, a pedlar cannot go through the country without a licence, and why should not there be a licence in a matter which affects a great industry in the country, why should not that have protection?—I am aware, of course, if that was the case, it would be argued that it would increase the service fee and make it dearer than the smaller farmers could offord; but I think that might be met in another way by subsidising in certain districts some of the approved stallions to approved mares. But I am quite satisfied if you want to improve and keep up the breed of horses in Ireland, the first thing to get at is the bad stallions and to weed them out of the country, by degrees, of course. It is the bad stallions that produce the bad mares; and if you have good stallions by degrees you will have a better class of mares. If you cannot make that compulsory, I would encourage the registration of sires, first of thoroughbreds, and I would also register half-bred horses, approved half-breds. I do not think that in Ireland you could lay it down as, I believe, they have in England under the Hunters' Improvement Society, that they are to have so many crosses of thoroughbreds, because I think in some of the best half-bred horses in Ireland it would be difficult to trace the dams. My experience in the South of the best half-bred horse is that the dams are very chancy. You cannot trace their descent in any way. You may be told, but it is very chancy how they are bred. Of course a half-bred should be got by a thoroughbred sire and out of a well-bred hunting mare. The farther you can trace her pedigree the better, but I would not have it a *sine qua non* that she should have so many crosses.

9575. Would you leave it to the judgment of a competent authority?—Yes; if he was an inspector and veterinary surgeon. I think there ought to be an appeal to some Board in case there was dissatisfaction. The first thing I would do is to license all stallions, thoroughbred and half-bred, that are let out for hire. Secondly, I would register the sires, thoroughbreds and half-breds, but I would not go any further. I would not register Clydesdales, or Shires. I would let them work for themselves. I would then register mares—approved mares—to be exactly as they are now, under the Royal Dublin Society—that is, that they should be free from all hereditary disease, and, of course, approved mares.

9576. And as to the produce—as to registering them?—I think that might be done, but I do not attach the same importance to that, because the produce, I take it, would be improved if you get good sires for good mares. I would let the produce take care of itself. That would be a matter for consideration at shows. The fourth thing I would do would be to support local shows by subsidising them with money, and giving premiums to the mares and their foals. That would be a matter entirely of detail. I do not think it is necessary to give premiums for stallions. I think if you take care to have good stallions passed, licensed, and registered that it would not be necessary—give prizes if you like—to subsidise them or give them Government money in the same way as you would to the others. There may be one very good sire, and the others won't show against it, or a man may have a very good sire and does not like to send him into the show for fear of getting cold, and an inferior one gets the prize. I would particularly confine my premiums to the brood mares.

9577. Into what kind of classes would you divide the brood mares—what ages, I mean?—I would not restrict them in age very much, except that I don't approve of breeding from two-year-olds.

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9578. That is what I want to get at?—I think it is apt to stop the growth of the mare, and that in one case in which it might succeed it would fail in twenty others. The people we ought to encourage, in my opinion, at shows, are the small farmers. The small farmers won't feed their young stock, and if you breed from a two-year-old, and don't feed it properly, you cannot expect that the produce would be very excellent. I would not give prizes for two-year-old brood mares at all. I would begin with three.

9579. Three?—I would breed from three-year-olds, for they are more developed than——

9580. Not three-year-olds with a foal?—Oh! no. Because then you mean they would breed from a two-year-old. I would not do anything to encourage breeding from two-year-olds.

9581. You think a three-year-old is not too early?—No, I don't; I have seen them breed good stock from three-year-olds. Another thing is that a farmer works his three-year-old always and a poor farmer cannot afford not to breed from his mare if he has one. Of course you cannot prohibit him breeding, on the contrary, I think it is a good thing to encourage him, if he has a good mare, to breed from her. Those are the four recommendations I would make as most necessary.

9582. To turn for a moment to these harness horses that are largely produced in the North, what is your opinion about the introduction of Hackney blood?—Well, I don't like Hackney blood.

9583. Confine it to harness horses?—Confine it to the harness horse. In the first place I think that it is soft, and in the second place I think that Hackneys are deceptive, if I may say so; that they make a very good appearance as young horses, but that the history that we read about them is that they don't turn out to be very good stayers. I think it is only fair to say I have had little practical experience of Hackneys myself, because it is a sort of blood I don't go in for very much; but I made inquiries about them from men that I knew to be competent judges. I have asked a great many in England about them, and I don't think that any person who studies the subject can ignore the evidence of men like the large dealers in England who have given their written opinion. I am sure that everyone here has seen these letters from Wimbush, East, Brown, and others. Men who come over to this country frequently to buy, and men with great experience, and others, have proved the Hackneys are deleterious in the countries where they have been tried, and therefore we must accept that as not good to breed from. There are other instances. I was in the North of England not very long ago, and I asked a gentleman there about them, in Northumberland, and he told me they always got their harness horses, the hacks, from Iceland, because they didn't want any kind of Hackney blood—they thought it an impure blood. Another reason, and perhaps my chief reason of all against Hackneys, is this—I think their blood is doing an injury to what has been one of the greatest industries in the country. Men from all parts have come to buy horses in Ireland, because they believe that the Irish blood is very pure, especially as regards hunters, that it is what is called good jumping blood. Well, if Hackneys are introduced largely into this country, of course it would be a great "crab" on that industry, and I think it would be a very great pity to do anything that would give the name that Ireland is deteriorating in horseflesh. Those are my principal reasons against Hackneys. I have seen Hackneys that, as far as their action goes, are good, I have seen a great number of others I don't like at all, they are too showy, with an up and down action. I consider they are deceptive, soft, have no endurance, are showy in action, and that they would do a material injury to the industry of the country.

9584. Do you think the production is falling off in Ireland, speaking generally, of hunters and high-class carriage horses?—I think that is a thing that differs very much. Taking Ireland as a whole, I take it the class of horse has rather improved. It comes back very much to what I was saying about the stallions. In counties where the breeding is not looked after at all it deteriorates; in places where it is looked after it is improving very much. I was down in the county Kilkenny last September, and judged at a show there that I used to judge at ten or fifteen years ago, or that I always attended if I were not a judge, and I think the class of horses has very much improved. This I put down to the interest being taken in the question and by the farmers understanding it better. The class was altogether superior to what it used to be. First of all, I attribute that to the Dublin Show, because its effect, permeates through the whole of Ireland, and I think that the class of horses, and the quality of horses at the Dublin Show is improving every year. But it must be remembered that in the Dublin Show the horses are only sent up by gentlemen, large farmers, and by business people that can afford it. The Dublin Show won't get at the small farmers, therefore I think that everything ought to be done to increase and improve all the country shows, and to get the small farmers to come in and show at them. These men cannot go into the Dublin Show, they cannot afford it, and they don't understand it. In places where local shows are held there is a decided improvement; in places where there are no shows breeding is deteriorating.

9585. Taking it all round you think we produce as many good hunters as previously in Ireland?—Yes; I think so. I think that a great number of them go out of the country younger than they used to go: therefore we don't see the development of them. If you take the young stock that goes out of Ireland and that bought at the show, I think there are as many good horses as there used to be, but the demand is very much greater and therefore people think there are fewer.

9586. And the price?—The price for a good young horse is I think as high as ever, but he must be a good one. I think in the second class and in the third and fourth classes the prices are very much less. That stands to reason for in these days of bicycles, motor cars, &c., there is not the same demand for hacks or harness horses that there used to be.

9587. There is also more competition from the American and foreign horse?—Yes, a good deal; and I would be very glad if it were possible that some check in the way of branding could be put on these American horses. A great number come into Belfast and into the North of Ireland, and I am told on very good authority that these horses are made up and sent to Moy fair and sold as Irish horses.

9588. Not being in your opinion as good as Irish horses?—No, those I have seen are certainly not as good. I think that there are good American horses because I have seen some, but I think they are picked: in the same way, as there are good and bad Irish hunters.

9589. You think that the fact that American horses may be sold as Irish horses is apt to give a bad name to the Irish hunter?—I do, or to Irish harness horses either. If they were sold as American horses and were good horses, well and good. As long as a horse is a good horse it does not matter where he comes from or how he is bred, but the Americans I have seen I didn't—with very few exceptions—like. I have seen a few I thought were good looking harness horses, but these good ones just cost as much as the similar horse in Ireland.

9590. When you say the demand for the second and third classes is falling off through various causes, do you mean you think the most profitable kind of horse to breed in Ireland would be a high class carriage horse or hunter?—Certainly.

9591. And for that purpose you prefer either a thoroughbred or a selected half-bred sire?—Yes.

9592. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Talking about the agricultural breeds, the heavier breeds up in the North of Ireland, do you think they could in any way be kept

to themselves?—I think that if you establish a system of registration, and making the thoroughbred and good half-bred horses very pronounced, that the others will naturally become a class of their own. Besides I think that the Clydesdale horses bear a stamp. I have never seen a horse got by a Clydesdale you could mistake for a hunter.

9593. For that reason you would like to see the agricultural horse bred from hairy-heeled horses, such as Clydesdales or Shires in preference to an animal of an equally soft kind who didn't show his want of breeding so plainly?—Yes, I would. Remember if a farmer can get what he wants from a thoroughbred horse I would rather have it; and I have seen lots of very good cart horses in the South of Ireland got from a good thoroughbred horse out of common mares. But I can quite understand the necessity for having big heavy animals for certain lands; I would let them drift into a class of their own by doing everything I could to bring the others forward.

9594. Do you think you could get enough thoroughbred or good half-bred stallions if the demand was created?—I think there would be great difficulty at first but by degrees, when sire owners became aware of what only would pass as a covering stallion in a country, they would buy the stamp that would suit; and the check that I would propose to put on them would prevent men buying cheap horses for the purpose of making a covering stallion in the country to make money, as I have seen done over and over again.

9596. Lord ASHTOWN.—About licensing stallions do you propose to license all stallions or only inspected and sound stallions?—I would license all stallions that are to be let out for public hire. If you choose to keep a stallion for your own use or for the use of your friends you are perfectly free to do so.

9597. Do you mean if I bought a stallion, no matter what it was, I should pay my licence?—If you were going to let it out for public hire.

9598. Is it to be submitted to an examination?—Yes; to be free from hereditary disease. If the system of licensing were considered too arbitrary the next thing I would come to would be veterinary inspection and registration, then the Royal Dublin Society would step in, for they would not register a horse defective in other respects, though he might be sound technically as regards hereditary desease.

9599. Every stallion before being let for hire should be suitable to the district and sound?—Yes.

9600. And no other stallions should be allowed to serve any but his own mares?—Yes. I would put a check on them.

9601. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—You said with regard to the veterinary examination of these stallions you would have them passed by an approved veterinary surgeon. Would you leave it to a single veterinary surgeon or have a board of veterinary surgeons?—I said if the party felt aggrieved either by the inspector or the veterinary surgeon, I would have an appeal to a board—whatever board might be considered suitable. Of course, I have not drawn out a scheme to say what it would be—but some board. But I would particularly guard against a man sending up a certificate from a veterinary surgeon in the country and then demanding registration. I think that in that way perhaps through ignorance lots of very unsound horses would be palmed off in the country.

9602. In fact you would safe-guard the individual opinion?—I would.

9603. Have you been through many fairs in Ireland of late years?—A great number.

9604. And there has been a great discussion as to the weedy useless animals there are in the fairs and this is attributed a great deal to the thoroughbred horse. But have you noticed that in addition to these weeds there are a lot of horses of substance and bone that are very underbred and misshapen, and practically useless for any purposes?—Yes; but in the first place to guard against getting this kind of animals you mention, first I would put a restriction on the stallions.

9605 Do you attribute that to the thoroughbred so much as to the nondescript stallion in the country?—I would attribute it to both together—breeding from a bad weedy sire, although thoroughbred, or from a nondescript animal.

9606. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you say in your paper, Sir Owen, that the bad weedy thoroughbreds have done more harm than anything?—Yes, I do; I think that there is nothing worse than a useless weedy thoroughbred bought simply because the owner thinks he can make a little profit in the country.

9607. With regard to the returns that you put in, do you mind telling us how you had them prepared?—Certainly; you are aware that in every county there are returns of these things for statistical purposes, and I got these from the different counties checked up to the last.

9608. We will take the county Londonderry. You have not checked those eleven stallions returned in Londonderry, as thoroughbred, with the Wetherby's Stud-book to see whether they are right or not?—I have not.

9609. So that they may not be absolutely accurate?—No; I really got it originally for my own information. I only offer it to you as it is; I have a detailed return of any of these horses that I can give you for your information. I can name every one of these horses in Londonderry, but I have not compared them.

9610. But is not the whole of the country divided into police districts?—Yes, certainly.

9611. And do you think it would be possible to obtain any returns more accurate than those of the police, each inspector being responsible for the return of his district?—I think it would be the most accurate way you could obtain it.

9612. You think it would be?—Yes; in the same way that agricultural statistics are prepared now.

9613. And you think a return has been obtained for 1896, though not yet published, in that manner?—I should think so; I don't know it as a fact, it does not go through me.

9614. There could be no more accurate way of obtaining a return?—I don't think so. This being a non-official one, there may be inaccuracies in it. I really got this for my own information.

9615. In the district which you are speaking of now, by what classes are the best brood mares kept?—Which district.

9616. I am talking of Ulster generally, omitting the congested districts?—By gentlemen, and by what you call gentlemen farmers, and large farmers.

9617. What do you call a large farmer?—Men such as there are plenty of in Tyrone, Armagh, and other counties, with 200 or 300 acres.

9618. Do these men breed the best horse?—I think they breed the best horse for their own purposes. They don't go in very much for hunters, but they breed the best stamp of general utility and farm horse. I may say that it is very exceptional to see a good colt or a filly with a small farmer.

9619. Their mares are of a very low class?—Yes; the large farmers have the best mares, and what is more they can afford to give a higher fee than a small farmer; and what decides the small farmers more than anything else is the price they have to pay for the service. I wasn't asked about fees or else I would have told you.

CHAIRMAN.—Don't wait to be asked anything you want to say.

9620. Mr. WRENCH.—Did you want to say anything more about fees?—I was going to say that the fees vary considerably. For instance, one horse in Meath is standing at £50, "Brown Prince"; "Ascetic" is £40. Then you come down to £10 for thoroughbreds, but the ordinary service fee through

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the country for thoroughbred horses is £3 to the farmers and £4 to gentlemen. Why they should charge them more I don't know, but they do.

9621. There are a good many so-called thoroughbred horses through Ireland that serve at lower rates?—Yes; often come down to £1, and what they call "the sight of a foal," and it is a very common thing through the whole of Ireland that a man will go to a friend and agree for the sight of a foal; if there is no foal he pays nothing; you can get a thoroughbred horse down to 10s. In the return I have I have got the fee of each horse, but of course there is no use troubling you with them.

9622. I think you said you thought the Irish blood was very pure. Did you mean from that there had been no importation into Ireland of cart-horse blood?—No, I mean what you call the original Irish brood mare or horse was considered to be of pure blood and good sound staying blood.

9623. Have you any idea when first of all foreign blood began to come in?—No; but I remember that about twenty years ago when Lord Lismore brought a Hackney stallion over to the county Tipperary there was the greatest outcry amongst all horse-breeding people in the country, that he was going to ruin the country.

9624. That was about twenty years ago?—I should think so; it might have been fifteen.

9625. Did you ever hear of any Clydesdale blood being imported into Ireland?—Very often; and I have heard it condemned very frequently, among people in the North of Ireland especially.

9626. You dislike Clydesdale blood in a hunter?—No, certainly not.

9627. CHAIRMAN. — The question was, do you dislike Clydesdale blood in a hunter?—I said, "Yes, certainly."

9628. You said the reverse?—Oh, thank you for the correction; it was the way it was put. Oh, certainly I dislike it.

9629. Mr. WRENCH.—You haven't looked up or taken the trouble to find out when Clydesdale blood and cart-horse blood was imported into Ireland?—I can't say. I know it has been here a very long time.

9630. You said Hackneys are soft?—I said I had no practical experience, but I gave it from the opinion of men whom I believe to be competent judges, and I gave you one or two instances of men who told me so.

9631. But you have not had any personal experience of Hackneys?—I have never had a Hackney.

9632. You don't know how they were bred?—I don't, but I said also that my greatest objection is that I consider it does harm to the great industry of horse-breeding in Ireland.

9633. Do you think that any of those small mares of Donegal would be likely to breed hunters. Is there any danger of their becoming hunter brood mares?—No, certainly not.

9634. No people would dream of breeding hunters from the mares that come out of Donegal?—No, and going farther than that, I say, though I don't like Hackneys, I think they have done less harm and a certain amount of good in Donegal—I have seen nearly all their sires there—because they were better than what they had before in Donegal. It does not join in any way upon a hunting country, but then, at the same time, if I were asked the question I would much rather see a good stout, small, long, low thoroughbred horse, if you could get him, or a half-bred horse there than the Hackneys, because of the prejudice against the blood.

9635. Do you think the produce of the thoroughbred horse would live and thrive as well in Donegal as the produce of a Hackney?—I think it would.

9636. You are now speaking without experience?—Well, yes. Of course, the experience of the Hackneys is only a few years in Donegal. But remember that there are eleven Hackneys in the county Donegal, besides the five of the Congested Districts Board, so that all the Hackneys in Donegal must not be put down to the Congested Districts Board. I don't know when they came in; I don't know whether the Congested Districts Board encouraged the others to get them or not, but there they are. Colonel St. Quintin was speaking about the troopers, and I see it has been suggested several times about Government studs. If you like my opinion on that——

9637. CHAIRMAN—We should like your opinion about anything connected with the subject?—I saw it was proposed by one or two witnesses that there should be Government studs. I should be very much against anything of the sort. I think that it would interfere a great deal with private enterprise. I think that they would cost an immense deal of money, and that the money would be a great deal more profitably used by being distributed through the country in the encouragement of shows such as I have recommended—local shows; and I think, looking at it from a financial point of view, the Government studs would have an enormous amount of misfits. And what would become of them? The Government would sell them, and that would be distributing on the part of the Government bad stock through the country.

9638. Of course there is a system of licensing?—Oh, still with all licensing you must have misfits.

9639. Still a system of licensing would be interfering with private enterprise?—Not to the same extent. Every one that put out his horse for hire would be obliged to have a licence, the same as in a great number of other trades—for keeping covering stallions is a trade—so that they would be all in the same boat that way.

9640. I suppose one of the practical effects of that would be to put an end to this class of thoroughbred horse now serving?—That are bought for a few sovereigns for a man to make profit through the country on.

9641. To that extent it would interfere with private enterprise?—Yes. There is another question that has arisen very often, and that is buying horses direct from breeders. I have seen a great deal about it. Troopers, I believe, it is impossible to buy through the country from breeders, except from large men who know their business. With small farmers, if a gentleman, or any person who is respectable or is a stranger, comes to them to buy a horse, they immediately think they have got a treasure, and you can't buy the animal. I don't think you can buy a horse, as a rule, from a small farmer at all until he has had a try at a fair, or perhaps two.

9642. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—With reference to that, it has been suggested that Government should take up some land and form a depôt, not for breeding, but for buying direct from breeders—buying at three years and keeping the horses for a year or eighteen months until they are fit to go into the service. Do you think that would be a good financial speculation for Government to carry out?—I think you could get the horses, but not direct from the breeders. As to the financial question, one would have to work it out to see what the cost would be before I could give an answer. I should not think it would do. I don't see anything to better the present system.

9643. You don't think it would be advisable for the Government, having a supply at their doors, as they have now, and having all they can take when they require them, to go to the expense of a large establishment to buy young stock, and to take all the risk that must necessarily be incurred until they are enabled to send them into the service?—Certainly not; I think they would be very foolish—that the Government will scarcely ever be able to buy direct from the breeders. I think that a farmer—in fact I

know that a farmer—will sell a horse to a dealer that he would not sell to you or to me. I have been to fairs with the late colonel of my regiment, when regiments used to supply themselves with horses, and when we saw a likely looking trooper I asked the price; it would be £50; and we had to send a dealer to buy because we could not. I mention that because a great deal has been said and written about Government buying direct from breeders. I think it is a very good thing to do if they can, and when the farmers will sell to them; but when horses are sent for an inspector to see, they are generally horses the farmers have not been able to get rid of anywhere else. That is my experience.

9644. The CHAIRMAN.—If these small weedy and unsound thoroughbreds, that are serving about the country at very low fees, disappear, what is to take their place; because the very small farmer in these districts obviously could not afford to pay a fee that would, commercially speaking, remunerate a man for having a good sound thoroughbred stallion?—I think I said to meet that it would be necessary in certain districts to subsidise approved horses for approved mares.

9645. You mean subsidised by the Government?—Subsidised by the Government, which would be a great deal a better way of spending money than establishing large studs—I don't say breeding studs, but large establishments like Colonel St. Quintin says have been suggested.

9646. You don't object to the Government placing proper stallions about the country at low fees?—I would rather use the existing stallions through the country than send stallions to the country. I think in the one case you encourage private enterprise; in the other you are rather apt to interfere with it.

9647. I think you said you were at Kilkenny the other day?—In September.

9648. You compared it with the period of fifteen or twenty years ago?—With the period of ten years ago. I lived in that country then.

9649. You thought that the class of mares was rather improved?—Yes. I made one suggestion to them which I think is a very important one. I don't know that this is the place to mention it. In these local shows it is very good to have prizes for brood mares; but I don't think a brood mare that wins in one show should ever be allowed to compete again in that show. I have seen instances of where the same mare has won at two, three, and four shows running. And farmers think it is of no use to compete against them. Of course I would give the same animal a Royal Dublin Society prize. This applies to nothing else but brood mares or stallions, because the others are always in classes of different ages.

9650. Taking your experience all over Ireland, do you think that the mares that people breed from generally have maintained the same stamp and quality that they had some fifteen or twenty years ago?—I think that the class of mare was deteriorating generally, except among very large breeders, until about ten years ago; and that since that time there has been a great improvement, which I attribute, as I mentioned before in the first instance, to the Dublin Show, which does not go far enough, as I also pointed out. It goes far enough for Dublin; it is a fine show, and it is the best market in the world; but it does not get in the farmers that you want to encourage to breed well, and to do that you must have local shows.

9651. Are you interested at all in the ponies in West Kerry or in the Connemara ponies?—I don't know much about Connemara or Kerry. I have been in Kerry; but I don't know sufficient of the ponies there to speak of them. I was glad to see the Congested Districts Board sent a Welsh pony down to Donegal. I think that will do good.

9652. Have you in your experience come across cases of hunters out of Connemara ponies?—Frequently, and no better ones could be had. I have frequently met them.

9653. You think that the thoroughbred crossed with the Connemara pony is likely to produce a good class of hunter, though not always in the first class?—I think a very useful general kind of hack hunter, but not a kind to breed a first-class hunter; but a very useful horse in his class and with good blood.

9654. We had it mentioned by Mr. Micks, Secretary of the Congested Districts Board, at the commencement of our inquiries, that when the Board took up the question of horse-breeding it was suggested to them by Mr. Chaplin to take Lord Waterford's opinion as to the best course of proceeding and so on. Are you aware that that was ever done?—He never mentioned that to me, though we often discussed the subject of horse-breeding. He kept a sire himself; but I don't remember his saying anything to me that the question of the kind of animal to be imported by the Congested Districts Board was referred to him. I may have left the country then, though I frequently saw him afterwards.

9655. That would be in '91 or '92?—That was after I left; but I know that he used to be very much opposed to Hackneys, and I remember that when Lord Lismore brought a Hackney sire into the country he thought it was the beginning of ruining the horse-breeding of that country. For his own carriage horses he always bought greys, and they were very difficult to get, as he always drove horses as much like hunters and of the stamp of hunters as he could get.

9656. You are not aware if the matter was referred to him?—I am not aware. I think if the matter was referred to him one would naturally think the Secretary could produce his reply. He never spoke to me about that; but I know his opinions used to be against Hackneys.

9657. Do you know anything about the foreign Governments buying more than they used to do, or buying more mares than they used to do?—Do you mean for service purposes?

9658. Well, for any purposes?—I don't quite understand.

9659. We have had it in evidence that the best mares are going out of the country chiefly to foreign countries?—I don't see how you are ever to prevent the farmer selling his mare whether she is good or bad.

9660. We should not mind if they were bad?—The only way I think to increase the good mares in the country is to get rid of the bad stallions. In the year 1873, I think it was, I was examined before Lord Rosebery's Committee in the House of Lords, and I then went very strongly into the question of bad stallions, and suggested taxing them, which is practically the same thing as licensing them. But thinking it over since I think licensing would be better. Then I didn't see, nor I think did the Committee see, how they could possibly stop the exportation and sale of mares. I thought the thing that could be done to encourage farmers to keep their mares was to give substantial prizes, and I think the prizes in Ireland should always be in money and not medals. I believe the Hunters' Improvement Society in England have done an immense deal of good. They give medals—I suppose the farmers there are larger and don't care for money—but in Ireland the farmers prefer the pounds, shillings, and pence.

9661. Lord ASHTOWN.—They give £5 or medals?—I am quite sure which they would take in Ireland—it would be the £5. With reference to the Hunters Improvement Society I am told by a prominent member that they registered half-breds as well as thoroughbreds, and mares too, I think.

9662. Mr. WRENCH.—The Hunters' Improvemen Society?—They register half-breds as well a thoroughbreds.

9663. Lord ASHTOWN.—Under certain conditions?—Yes; they are obliged to have four crosses, I think,

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9664. The CHAIRMAN.—It has been suggested before the Commission that in the case of half-bred sires before they are registered it should be ascertained what kind of stock they have got, in addition to the inspection of the stallions themselves?—Well, I think that would be unfair, because then a man might buy a very good half-bred stallion, and he would have to keep him a year before he got him registered, and if you want to make registration a great point, without which you will not give prizes, you should encourage not discourage the horse from the outset. I would register him from the appearance and soundness to begin with.

9665. It has been given in evidence that some districts are without a stallion, notably West Cork. How would you supply these districts with suitable stallions in any scheme you think of?—I would leave it to private enterprise. I would not send a Government stallion down.

9666. Because, I believe, some time ago the Government did send a horse down?—I am talking of a different thing from what you are; you are talking now not of a congested district.

9667. No, no; this is West Cork—the district they sent "York" to some years ago?—Yes; I believe that if the country requires them, stallions will turn up; they may be rather scarce for a year or two, but in any country that wants them, they will turn up because it is a paying business.

9668. Mr. WRENCH.—Then you would register half-bred stallions got by a thoroughbred horse out of a good looking mare?—Out of a well-bred mare. I would rather have the cross.

9669. But you would register that?—I would.

9670. I don't quite understand you as to the manner in which you would have the mares registered. What mares would you have registered and how would you have it done?—I would have it done under the Royal Dublin Society if possible, because I think they have an organisation ready that if you started you can put into working order.

9671. Would you leave it optional for people to register their mares?—Yes; but as I said at the beginning, I think that the Royal Dublin Society, or whatever society works the horse-breeding in Ireland, ought to have more agents through the country, otherwise it would be impossible in countries where there are good sensible farmers, as there are in the North, to receive the advantages of the scheme and to register their horses. I think it would be absolutely necessary to establish some system—and I don't think you could do it better than under the Royal Dublin Society—to have agents through the country to show the advantages of registration, and to let it be demonstrated at the shows where the pounds, shillings, and pence comes in, and where they will see the prizes they get.

9672. And you would rather do that through the Royal Dublin Society than through a county committee?—Through the Royal Dublin Society—in conjunction with a county committee. I think all county committees would require a central authority, otherwise they would be fighting amongst themselves.

9673. Did you hear it suggested here by a gentleman from Limerick that all horses should be registered like dogs through the petty sessions clerks, and that a nominal fee should be paid, and that anyone who wanted a certificate of the breeding should be able to get it by paying a shilling fee or something of the kind?—I don't see the object of it.

9674. To keep a record of the way in which every animal was bred. Do you think it practical?—Neither practical nor useful.

9675. It is quite sufficient to enable people to register mares if you wish to register them?—Not only to register but to encourage the registration of brood mares—I would make it compulsory—if feasible do you mean?

9676. How exactly would you encourage it beyond given prizes to local shows for the produce?—Through the Royal Dublin Society having local committees or agents, and letting the farmers know what half of them don't know.

9677. But the way would be giving prizes at local shows?—Yes; and ventilating the advantages of registration.

9678. And do you think that the produce of these registered mares would sell for a higher price than the ordinary ones?—I do; of course you will have misfits everywhere.

9679. But there would be a money advantage?—Yes, with the general breeding.

9680. The CHAIRMAN.—Do you think our statistical information as regards horse-breeding as an industry in Ireland is sufficient?—I scarcely know what it is.

9681. It only gives us the numbers in the country and the exports and imports?—You mean the public one. I think you mean what was before your own Commission.

9682. No; I mean the public one?—Yes; I think it is. I don't see that any further information can be got that would increase the horse-breeding in Ireland. I don't see any object in it, looking at it from a horse-breeding point of view.

9683. Is there anything else you can suggest to us now?—I don't think there is. May I refer to my memorandum which I sent up.

9684. Mr. WRENCH.—I don't think you have left anything out.

Witness.—There is one thing that I have a note of here I see. That is that in any country where there is fox-hunting, it does a great deal to improve and maintain the breed of horses in Ireland; and that is one reason that in the South of Ireland—that is south of Dublin—you have a much better class of horse than you have in the North, where you have no fox hunts.

9685. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you see any way to enable the Government to establish fox hunts in the North?—No; but I think all these things come out. I said there was a great number of dealers in the North of Ireland who buy an immense number of hunters, but I find that all their hunters come from the South or West.

9686. There are dealers all over the North?—A tremendous lot of dealers are in the North, and generally their horses are bought from the South. I think these are all the points.

The Commission adjourned to next day.

NINETEENTH DAY.—FRIDAY, JANUARY 8TH, 1897.

Jan. 8, 1897.

Present:—THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, HON. HENRY W. FITZWILLIAM, Mr. P. LA TOUCHE, COLONEL ST. QUINTIN, LORD RATHDONNELL, Mr. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. JAMES DALY, Liffey Bank, Dublin, examined.

Mr. James Daly.

9687. CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Daly, you live at Liffey Bank?—Yes, sir.

9688. And you have been engaged in horse breeding for a considerable number of years?—Yes.

9689. You have a stud farm of your own, have you not?—Yes.

9690. What class of horses generally do you deal in, Mr. Daly?—Well, I buy hunters, chargers, harness horses, troopers, and remount horses.

9691. Taking the hunters first—do you find the supply of hunters to be as good as it used to be?—Well, I don't know that it is quite as good, but I think it is quite equal to the demand. The demand is good, and there is a fair supply, not of very high-class horses, because they are never very plentiful.

9692. Is the demand increasing, do you think?—The demand always has been increasing for a good horse, and is steadily going on.

9693. Have the prices kept about the same?—They certainly have been no worse, if not better. I should say better.

9694. And do the same remarks apply to high-class carriage horses?—Certainly.

9695. And do you find that the supply is about the same?—Well, the supply is not quite equal to the demand. I could sell more good horses if they were there.

9696. Do you think the supply could be largely increased without affecting the price?—Yes.

9697. What parts of the country supply you chiefly with those high-class hunters and high-class carriage horses?—Well, I buy most horses in Tipperary, Cork, Meath, Westmeath. Well then there are several other counties, such as Limerick.

9697A. I suppose you buy all over Ireland?—Yes, my lord, with very few exceptions.

9698. In the South mostly?—In the South. I used to go a good deal to the North of Ireland years ago, but I do not go there now. I have bought some very good horses in the North of Ireland.

9699. Why have you left off going there?—Because they have ceased to breed good horses. They have not the thoroughbred horses there now that they used to have formerly.

9700. Do you attribute that to the absence of good thoroughbred stallions in the North?—I do.

9701. And the remounts you get in the same district, mainly?—In the South principally—South and West.

9702. Do you buy at all in the congested districts, or anywhere in the neighbourhood?—Well I don't know about the congested districts. But I have bought several high-priced horses, good horses, in Mayo and in Londonderry. I have bought some horses there from Donegal. That was when I went to the North of Ireland.

9703. Do you buy generally at the fairs or from breeders?—Well, I attend all the fairs, but I buy principally from the breeders.

9704. Do you think that the supply of good horses at the fairs has fallen off?—Oh, yes.

9705. They are bought before they get to the fairs?—Very often. Then the Royal Dublin Society's Show has taken a great many of the horses that did attend fairs such as Mullingar and Ballinasloe, and other fairs. A good many come to Dublin in August.

9706. Are you able to give us any opinion, Mr. Daly, as to whether good horses are bred on small farms, or whether they principally come from the larger class of farms?—I would say that occasionally good horses may be bred by small farmers, but as a rule, the better horse is bred by the better class. When I say a small farmer I mean a man of twenty acres. I have often bought a good horse even from those people. As a rule the others breed the best; they are in a better position to breed them.

9707. I think you said that in your opinion the North, speaking broadly, is not well supplied with suitable thoroughbred stallions?—No, my lord.

9708. Is the South and West?—In the South and West there are thoroughbred horses. They may be improved—some of them.

9709. We have heard a good deal of evidence before us to the effect that in some parts of the country thoroughbred sires are of an exceedingly inferior description, is that your opinion?—Well, my opinion is that they could be improved a great deal. The great want here is a good thoroughbred horse—a good one.

9710. Throughout the country generally?—Oh, no. Kildare and Meath, I think, are very well supplied, and Dublin, and there are some good horses in county Cork, Limerick, and Waterford. I don't mean any of those places.

9711. You say that in some parts of the country there is great need of a better class of thoroughbred stallion?—Yes, certainly. I think it is no good attempting to do anything without a really good horse to start with.

9712. In those parts of the country that you have in your mind do you think that the farmers could pay for the service of a good horse?—I think they ought not to be asked to pay, my lord, unless a very nominal sum. That is the way to induce them, according to my opinion. Give them a very good horse at a very nominal fee if you want them to breed.

9713. Have you any idea at all in your mind as to how that could be done?—Supply a good horse, my lord.

9714. I mean by what machinery—by what means?—Send a good horse into the districts that he is required in.

9715. Do you think that the Royal Dublin Society or some such body should undertake that work?—I think the Royal Dublin Society could do it very well.

9716. Well, now, for the hunters and the high-class harness horses and the remounts, do you think that the thoroughbred sire is the most suitable sire to produce that class of horse?—Certainly; in fact nothing else can produce it.

9717. Have you any objection to a half-bred sire?—I have to their being subsidised by the Government. I do not see that a half-bred sire has got any pull, if a thoroughbred sire with the same qualities can be produced, and they are a most advantageous animal to take up.

9718. In what way?—If you breed from a thoroughbred sire with a very moderate mare the produce very often is a good horse. If you cross her with a half-bred horse my opinion is that it is a very doubtful case.

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Mr. James Daly.

9719. But in regard to the small, weedy, very light mares that we hear of in some parts of Ireland, would you in their case also prefer a thoroughbred sire, provided that he had sufficient bone and substance?—Certainly, my lord. I think the horse ought to be a thoroughbred, and of sufficient strength and substance. In fact I mean a good horse.

9720. Would it be difficult to find that kind of stallion?—No, my lord, if you pay for him. There is a difficulty always about finding a good one, but it is wonderful what an effect money has. I have a few of them myself, but I have had to pay for them.

9721. Now, as to harness horses, is not action one of the first requirements of a harness horse?—Yes, my lord.

9722. Do you think that the thoroughbred sire is as likely to give action as, say, the Hackney sire?—Yes.

9723. Have you any experience of the produce of Hackney sires, have any passed through your hands?—Well, I have only seen them casually. I have certainly not taken much notice of them.

9724. Have you got any opinion of your own as to the effect likely to be produced by the introduction of Hackney blood?—I think if it was the object of the Government to ruin the horse-breeding industry in Ireland they could not go about it in a more effectual manner.

9725. Do you think that the Hackney blood is likely to spread through the country from the congested districts, or could it be confined to the congested districts?—I certainly think it would spread; in fact, I am sure it would.

9726. And do you think that the strain of the Hackney blood would be more difficult to detect after a generation or two than the strain of, say, the Clydesdale?—There is no difficulty in detecting the strain of the Hackney to any man who knows anything about a horse. I don't see any difficulty about it at all.

9727. Then, if there is no difficulty in detecting the Hackney strain, what danger is there of the Hackney strain ruining the industry throughout the country generally?—I may tell you that the people who come here to buy our horses will cease to come; and the foreigners will not have anything to do with them, because they are already flooded with them themselves, and know what they are, and there is no use in our breeding horses if we have not customers to buy them. Every man in Ireland who breeds a horse breeds him to sell. Therefore he ought to breed what the customer wants.

9728. Should we not go on breeding what the customer wants in spite of the Hackney blood, if, as you think, anybody can detect the Hackney blood?—I don't think so, my lord. There are only two classes, according to my opinion, to breed—one is the cart horse and the other is the thoroughbred horse; but let that thoroughbred sire be of the proper class.

9729. As to what I may call the second-class harness horse, the general utility horse, and such like, is the price as good as it used to be for them?—It is not, my lord—nothing like it. You see we are flooded with American horses. Forty thousand American horses come into Great Britain and Ireland every year.

9730. Do many of them come to Ireland?—Yes, a good many of them, my lord. There is a cutting I took out of the *Manchester Chronicle* [indicating].

9731. You took the figures out of this, did you, Mr. Daly?—That is so. I read another account last night, where they said between forty and forty-six thousand come in.

9732. Well, of course, I can't discuss the absolute accuracy of the figures, because we have no way of getting at it, but I assume that there is a very large importation?—There is, my lord. If we send horses to America—I send many horses to America—they charge us 30 per cent. on all horses going out unless they are thoroughbred. On any half-bred horses going to America they charge 30 per cent. on them, and American horses get in free here.

9733. Do you buy those American horses yourself?—No, my lord, I have never bought an American horse.

9734. They are very good, some of them—are they not?—I have never heard of any of them being very good.

9735. Do you think that American horses are imported into Ireland and sold again as Irish horses?—I have heard of such a thing occurring. I think all those horses coming from America ought to be branded, or something done to them.

9736. You think they should be marked in some way?—I do, most decidedly.

9737. And to this importation you largely attribute the fact that the trade in the general utility horse of that kind is very much falling off?—Yes; I should say 30 per cent. at least.

9738. What, in your opinion, is the most profitable kind of horse for a farmer to breed?—The produce of the best thoroughbred sires to get hunters and harness horses. If the Government encouraged that they would soon see a good improvement. There is no other way of doing it. There is no use in breeding common horses, because you can get nothing for them. You may breed them to do farming work, but they won't pay you.

9739. Do you know anything of the Kerry ponies or the Connemara ponies?—I have only had one Connemara pony. I had a very good one once—a cob—and I sold it for £200 to Mr. Fox, and he told me often he would not take twice £200 for it. I have bought horses from Connemara ponies—at least I have been told so. Personally I don't know.

9740. They were very good?—They were.

9741. They would be by a thoroughbred?—Oh, certainly.

9742. Do you attach much importance yourself in buying to pedigree?—Well, I always try a horse and then look out for the pedigree. I would not buy a horse off the book.

9743. Do you think you generally get pretty accurate pedigrees?—I should say so. I think the men as a rule are very truthful.

9744. Have you at all considered, Mr. Daly, the advisability or the practicability of licensing stallions, or having a more stringent system of registering stallions?—Well, I think that registration or licensing stallions would be a very good thing, my lord; but if they followed it up by a system of sending their good horses into the country and charging a low fee for them, it would soon put the bad ones out.

9745. And as to the mares generally throughout the parts of the country that breed hunters and high-class carriage horses, and so on, are they suitable?—Yes; I would say there is a very fair supply of mares, not too many, but quite enough.

9746. And as good quality as they used to be?—Well, I think so; they must be, for they breed horses just as well if not better.

9747. And do they keep up any of the special characteristics that we hear of—of what we call the old Irish mare?—Well, I have heard a good deal about the old Irish mare, and I think there are a good many of them left.

9748. It would be rather a difficult animal to define accurately?—Well, I would say it would, my lord.

9749. And we have had before us that there is a greater tendency now than there used to be formerly among farmers to sell their best mares to foreigners—have you any opinion about that?—Well, if a farmer has a good mare and wants to dispose of her, I don't see why he should not.

9750. The question is, does he do so more than formerly—is there more demand from abroad?—The

foreigners as a rule buy all the mares; in fact they would buy 90 per cent. mares.

9751. Do you know are they buying more than they used to—are there more going abroad than formerly?—I should say there were; I should say they go at the rate of about 5,000 a year.

9752. Mostly mares?—Mostly mares—oh, certainly.

9753. Bought for the foreign goverments?—A great deal for the foreign governments. A great many private foreign buyers come here too; nearly all the continental armies are mounted from Ireland.

9754. Do you know what prices the foreign governments give—are they far beyond the prices our Government gives?—I have never sold any to them, but I believe they give more than our Government does—at least I have heard so. I don't know.

9755. And they much prefer mares?—Yes, I believe so.

9756. I gather, Mr. Daly, that you think that the best thing that could be possibly done to improve horse breeding in Ireland would be the introduction of a better class of stallion?—There is no other way of doing it, my lord. There is no other way it can be done.

9757. Do you think it would be a good thing to try to induce the farmers to keep their mares at home instead of selling the best of them?—If you produce a good stallion the farmers will keep the mares. The farmers are open to their own interests, and they know well what suits them best.

9758. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You rather object, Mr. Daly, to half-bred stallions—do you think you could get the required number of thoroughbred stallions to satisfy the wants of the country?—I do, sir.

9759. That is at a reasonable sum?—Yes; well, I don't know what you would call a reasonable sum, what private people are prepared to pay for them.

9760. Yes. Do you think you could get quite enough of them?—I don't think you could get them in a great hurry. They would not be in the market to start with in any large quantity, but you could get them.

9761. I gather the way that you would like to help the horse breeding interest would be by allocating good stallions and subsidising them, and obliging them for that subsidy to serve farmers' mares at a low fee?—Yes.

9762. What do you think the large farmers are able to pay?—Well, I don't know what they are able to pay. Those men will go where the best horse is, independent of the charge. I don't mean that the horse should be sent into a district of that kind. I thought you wanted to send them into districts where they were required.

9763. Yes, one would. What do you think the smaller farmer could pay?—I don't think any farmer ought to pay more than a pound for a good class of horse, if you want to hold out an inducement to him to breed, be he poor or rich. The rich man won't think £1 a bit too much more than the poor one; I mean if the Government is going to do it, sir. They do those things on the Continent. The Governments give a couple of thousand pounds for a horse and then sell him afterwards to somebody for £400 or £500, and let him out to farmers.

9764. Talking about Hackneys, you said that you thought that any buyer could detect the Hackney cross, or the cross of any of those breeds?—Well, I don't think a dealer would have much difficulty about it.

9765. Do you think the general buyer would?—I can only speak for myself.

9766. In a generation or two?—I cannot answer that question.

9767. You think he could not?—I think he ought, if he is going out horse buying. But sometimes they let people out on that errand.

9768. Well, if you do think that it would be difficult to detect it in a few generations, I presume it would be dangerous to employ it?—Most decidedly.

9769. And for that reason, I suppose, if you do use any of those heavier horses, you would like to have a hairy-heeled one that would really show his hairy heels?—Let him be a cart horse.

9770. A Shire, or something of that sort?—Yes.

9771. Could you in any way suggest any means of keeping the mares in the country?—The only way I could suggest would be to send them good stallions, and they will find it their interest to keep good mares, and they will do so. It is very hard to tell a man not to sell his mare if he wants money and has a saleable animal. You would be a long time talking to him before he did it either.

9772. Lord ASHTOWN.—How much will you have to pay for those thoroughbred sires?—Well, I think you ought to pay from £500 to £1,000.

9773. You want the Government to buy the sire?—Certainly.

9774. And you would have the Government sell to the private individual?—No.

9775. The Government would stand the sire in certain places?—Where he would be required.

9776. I thought you meant the private individual to buy the sire and the Government to subsidise him?—I think the private individual would hardly do that.

9777. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Mr. Daly, you know a part of the North of Ireland?—I know the North well.

9778. What sort of horses do you think they breed up there?—I have not been there for a good many years, but when I was going to the North of Ireland there were some very good stud horses stood there. There was Lindsay, of Glenboy, always kept a couple of stallions. I often found a blood horse near Downpatrick, Saintfield, and Ballyclare, county Antrim.

9779. Do you know now whether they breed the same class of horses they used?—Well, I don't think they do, but I don't go there.

9780. Can you account for that at all in any way?—Well, the thoroughbred horses are not there, I believe. That is the only way I could account for it. I don't know.

9781. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Is it not the case that it is almost chiefly in the South where the proportions of the best thoroughbreds are kept?—Yes.

9782. And that is practically the only district in which you can get what you require for your business—high-class hunters and troopers?—Yes, South and West.

9783. Well now, Roscommon in former days was one of the best counties in Ireland for them both?—It was.

9784. Could you get them there now?—In very small quantities. That is just a district where they would want a few good stallions.

9785. But that is an excellent horse-producing county?—Splendid.

9786. And it has simply gone to the bad from the want of having proper animals placed there?—Quite so.

9787. You say that in many counties that are in the congested districts—Connemara, Kerry, and all around—there in former days you were able to get high-class horses?—I have bought many high-class horses out of Kerry, and out of Mayo too.

9788. Then certainly a great proportion of that district is capable of producing good horses?—Certainly; I bought from Captain Knox and his brother, and Dr. M'Auley, and other people in Mayo, very good horses.

9789. In regard to the half-bred horses, you say that you would have nothing but the absolute clean bred horse; would you propose that he should be in the stud-book—what would you call "Mackintosh" and "Mayboy," and those horses that you know of—we call them half-bred?—I don't think it is fair to call either of these half-bred; they are not half-bred.

9790. Quite so; but we are bound to say that they are half-bred, because they are not in the stud-book?

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—You are bound to say they are not in the stud-book, Colonel, but they are not half-bred.

9791. You would not object to those horses?—No, because I know they are thoroughbreds.

9792. But they come under the denomination of half-bred?—Yes.

9793. Simply because they are not in the stud-book?—Yes.

9794. Well, there are several of those horses about, but you count them as thoroughbred?—Yes; what I call a half-bred horse is a hunter.

9795. Well, what I want to arrive at is what supervision you would think it necessary to exercise in the case of horses of that class. Of course with the clean bred horse in the stud-book you could deal, but you would not have any very fixed lines with regard to horses of that class?—I think if the Government is going to send stallions they ought to be thoroughbred and nothing else.

9796. Quite so; but you would count these as thoroughbred horses?—I would.

9797. With regard to the trooper class, there have been several schemes put forward at different times which may not have come under your notice—one was for Government to breed its own troopers—to establish a breeding establishment for breeding troopers. Do you think that that would be an advisable thing for the Government to undertake?—I don't, Colonel.

9798. Do you think it would pay anyone to breed troopers?—Certainly not; I don't think anyone ever thought of starting breeding troopers.

9799. Then we simply get our troopers from the horses that are bred with a higher object and have not come up to the standard?—They are animals that get through the riddle.

9800. And there are plenty of them that we should get with bone and substance and suitable to the purpose with the thoroughbred horses, and the breeding carried on as it is now?—I don't think, Colonel, you would buy two troopers in the year, the large quantity you buy, that would not be by thoroughbred horses; they are all by thoroughbred horses.

9801. I say they are; but I say even as it is now you can get them?—Yes.

9802. And they are all by thoroughbred horses?—Certainly.

9803. And taking the fairs, there are a great number of these weedy wretched animals there?—Well, of course they will be, no matter what you do. At least there are a great many of them—unfortunately too many.

9804. Are there not as many that are strong animals, but underbred and misshapen so that you cannot touch them for anything hardly?—Yes; just as much as there are of weeds.

9805. That is from breeding from a cross-bred horse?—Yes.

9806. You can only make an approximate estimate of the number of horses taken by the foreign buyers?—Oh, that is all; well, I have made inquiries from people who buy them for them, and I would say about 5,000.

9807. Mr. WRENCH.—That is the foreign demand on the whole of Ireland?—Yes; that would be Government horses, bought for foreign governments. That would not at all take in what private people would buy.

9808. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Take the breed of horse that you are speaking of, like the Hackney, where it is contended that after a cross or two it would be very difficult to detect except to an experienced eye, don't you think that very shortly people would find out for themselves, and leave the district in which that taint was?—Certainly.

9809. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Do you think it would pay a farmer better to breed from a thoroughbred sire than any other?—Certainly; in fact it is the only horse that would pay.

9810. You said in the old days you used to go to the North of Ireland to buy horses?—Yes.

9811. And you have left off now because the thoroughbred sires appear to have disappeared out of the district?—Yes.

9812. You have not got a high opinion of the intelligence of the North of Ireland farmer as a horse-breeder?—No, I have not; they don't breed good horses.

9813. You don't think there is anything in the North of Ireland itself, in either climate or soil, which precludes the possibility of their breeding good horses?—Well, I don't see any reason why they might not. Of course it is not a soil adapted as the South is, but I don't see any reason why they might not, because they have bred good horses there, but they are not used the same as the horses in the South.

9814. How do you mean "used"?—A farmer's son in the South will get upon a horse and ride him to hounds; they won't do that in the North.

9815. Do you think that to a certain extent the disappearance of the thoroughbred sire in the North of Ireland is owing to the absence of fox-hunting up there?—Well, they never had any fox-hunting up there.

9816. But still in old times they used to breed good horses?—It was never a hunter-breeding country, but they bred nice horses, that would be hunters if they were used. I, for instance, bought chargers there, which must show blood and quality.

9817. You said that you had seen casually the produce of Hackney stallions?—Well, very little, sir.

9818. You don't attach much importance to your opinion of these animals—you have seen too few of them?—No, sir; but I would not want to see the produce.

9819. Well, you said that the fee charged for the use of these valuable stallions would be £1?—I think if you want to encourage the farmers to breed, you must hold out some very good inducement.

9820. I think that, instead of being an inducement, would be a deterrent to farmers whose valuations, say, would be only 10*s.* per annum, of whom there are many thousands in the West of Ireland, where an enormous quantity of horses are bred—what would you propose to do for those farmers?—I would send them a thoroughbred horse in all cases—of course of a different type; you send a short-legged, strong thoroughbred horse anywhere.

9821. You would put him at a fee, I suppose, of 5*s.*, something like that?—Put it as low as you can, sir; they would not object to that.

9822. Do you think that those horses could be provided at from £500 to £1,000, that is in course of time?—I do, and they might be bought for less.

9823. I understood you to say that you considered that the value of an Irish horse was owing to a great extent to its being nearly in every instance got by a thoroughbred horse out of a mare that was got by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes; a clean-legged mare that has worked on a farm previously is as good a horse as any I see, as a rule.

9824. Mr. WRENCH.—You are one of the people who practice what they preach; you have four of the best thoroughbred stallions in Ireland?—I have four very good horses.

9825. You don't charge £1 apiece for them?—I do not; I could not afford to give £2,500 for a horse, and charge £1 for him. But I am not the British Government.

9826. But do you think it would be possible to buy the class of horse you recommend for £500 in any considerable numbers on an average?—Well, I think you could. My notion would be not to lose a good horse, if he cost £1,000. But I say that if the Government are going to do a thing, they might do it well; if not they had better not do it at all, and let private enterprise do it.

9827. But it has taken you a good long time to

find a suitable horse?—Well, I was laying out Daly's money as carefully as I could, and I wanted to get the best animal, and I fairly succeeded.

9828. When you have been looking for the Dublin Society's stallions, sometimes it has taken you a long time to find the right horse?—The Dublin Society want a very good animal for £300. If they say "Daly, find the horse and we will find the money," I could do it.

9829. You don't think it would be possible to find a horse that would do any good in the country for £300?—I certainly do not.

9830. Do you object to the Clydesdale cross in hunters?—I do.

9831. Do you think you could detect it in the animals you buy?—Yes.

9832. Do you know there are a great many Clydesdale and cart horse stallions in some of the districts in which you buy?—I suppose there are.

9833. Do you know that in Westmeath, Meath, and Cork there are more cart horses and half-bred cart stallions than there are thoroughbreds?—I don't know, but it may be possible.

9834. I think you said you had taken the figures, as far as you could, from the foreign governments as to what their purchases in Ireland are?—It was merely what I got from other people who did business with them.

9835. What governments do you allude to?—Swiss, Italian, and other Continental people.

9836. Dutch?—Yes, I believe so. I sent, myself, horses to Germany. I sent eight to Berlin the other day, but they were not troopers.

9837. The German government do not buy troopers now from Ireland?—I never sold a trooper to any government but the one.

9838. Are the Dutch the largest buyers?—I really could not tell you.

9839. Those are then the governments you allude to, the Swiss, Italian, and the Dutch?—I believe so.

9840. Do you know that all those governments—that the Swiss government and the Italian government buy a considerable number of Hackney stallions?—I don't know. I know that all the people from those countries that I have spoken to—the government officials all condemned them.

9841. But you don't know that they still buy them?—I do not.

9842. Do you know that the Dutch government have been purchasing some troopers from Canada?—I do not, but I know the English government went there and could not get any, and came back again.

9843. You don't know that the Dutch government have recently made an importation as an experiment?—No, sir.

9844. Do you think that the importation of American horses lessens the price of Irish horses?—Certainly, of a certain class.

9845. When you refer to buying in Mayo and Kerry, have you ever gone further west than Tralee?—No, I have not.

9846. Have you ever gone further west in Mayo than Westport and Ballina?—No.

9846. That was the district you alluded to in talking of those counties?—Yes; but I have bought horses that came a bit further in. That was the furthest part I have been myself.

9847. And with regard to the class of people who produce the horses that you buy, do you agree with Mr. Roberts in his division of classes. He said that there were a certain lot of small farmers, those below £100 valuation, and that they bred worthless animals; that there were a class from £100 to £200, that bred a fair kind of animal; but that the people who bred the horses for which Ireland had acquired such a high character were the gentlemen and the farmers above £200 valuation. He gave that as a rough classification?—I am very bad at figures. I don't know anything about that part of the subject.

9848. What class generally breed good horses?—It is difficult to define them. You might get a very good horse from a very poor man. Very often I did.

9849. Do you think it is impossible to make any classification of that sort?—I think wherever a good stallion is standing poor or rich may produce a good horse from him. I have seen rich men with the worst horses I ever saw as well as poor men.

9850. CHAIRMAN.—How many thoroughbred stallions have you got?—Six, my lord.

9851. Do you breed yourself; have you any mares?—I have four at my own stud and ten leased.

9852. Thoroughbred mares?—Yes.

9853. What you breed yourself are thoroughbred stock?—Thoroughbred stock. I bought a good deal also.

9854. How many mares do you say?—I said I had six horses. I thought you were speaking of horses.

9855. Have you any mares of your own?—Yes, seven.

9856. Well, then, these horses of your own, what are they used for, breeding—thoroughbred stock?—And half-bred stock. I bought stock the other day by a horse of mine that stands at £5, and I gave the man £250 for a two-year-old by him.

9857. This class of thoroughbred that you think might be bought by the Government and sent about to the poorer parts of the country, I presume, you would not require such an expensive valuable horse as you would if your object was to breed thoroughbred stock?—No. The horse you want is a horse likely to get high-class hunters and harness horses, and useful horses of everything description. Of course, racing people will take care of themselves; they don't want any looking after at all.

9858. And if there was a demand for that kind of stallion, do you think that horses that are not quite fast enough for racing might be bought at a fairly reasonable price?—I do, my lord. Of course that is the sort of horse you would require to buy—a horse with a certain amount of power, quality, and action

9859. Now, supposing the Government or some other benign institution were to buy thoroughbred horses and locate them about the country at a very low fee, according to the condition of the people, say anything from 5*s.* to £1, would you not have some kind of selection or supervision over the class of mares that were sent to them, or would you let any man send any mare to them?—Well, I would leave it an open question, because I have seen so many mares that you might reject that might be the very best brood mares. I have a mare myself that I am almost sure no man would breed from, because of an accident she had. I gave £500 for her, and she has never bred a deformed animal. She bred an animal I refused £5,000 for; but unfortunately when I sold him I only got £500 for him. I think I would leave it an open question about the mares, my lord.

9860. How would you regulate the fee—would it be according to a man's valuation or how?—Well, I really think I would make it one charge altogether. I do not see why any man would be taxed more than another. If a horse is there, sent by the Government at a low fee I do not see if I was rated at a high rate why I would not avail myself of the low fee as well as a poor man.

9861. Then you would have them all stand at the lower fee; if it was 5*s*?—I don't think you would get so low as 5*s*., my lord.

9862. Do you not think that the Government in making a present of the service of the horses should have a choice as to the mares sent to them?—I don't think I would, my lord. I would see, of course, that the horses that were sent should be sound. But, I think, in the case many good mares, are a little bit touched in the wind, from old age, or things of

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that kind, I don't think I would have them examined. It would create a lot of bother, and I don't think it would do any good.

9863. Well, there would be a tremendous scramble in all those districts for the service of these horses?—Well, I would expect that there would be regulations.

9864. That is what I want to try to get at. How do you think it would be regulated?—I really do not know, my lord.

9865. Are your horses registered under the Dublin Society's scheme?—They are, my lord.

9866. Do you approve of the work that the Dublin Society are doing through the country?—I do, my lord.

9867. Have you any suggestions to make as to whether their system could be improved in any way?—I just made a few notes here, my lord. I would encourage local shows for mares and young stock, giving suitable prizes to young mares from three to six years old, with foals at foot.

9868. You don't disapprove of breeding from two-year olds?—I don't disapprove of sending a mare two years old to the horse. Some of the best horses I ever had were the produce of two-year-old fillies. I would advocate the sending of the best suitable thoroughbred horses into the districts where they were required at a nominal charge; the continuation of registering stallions by the Royal Dublin Society; no Hackney or half-bred stallions to be subsidised by the Government. I would brand or tax American horses. It is the only country in the world where they charge a tax on our horses. If I send a half-bred horse they will charge 30 per cent. I don't see why they should come in here and try to wipe us out.

9869. You don't think it would be sufficient to mark them?—I do not know whether you can do that or not, my lord. I would certainly do it if I could.

9870. Mr. WRENCH.—You would prefer the hot iron to anything else?—If I could not apply the other I would.

9871. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think there is any likelihood that the prices for the second-class horses will recover?—Certainly not, my lord, because as long as the Americans come in they will regulate that.

9872. You told us that they have, to a large extent, given up keeping good suitable thoroughbred sires in the North?—Well, I believe they have, my lord. I do not know much of the North now. I have not been there for years, and I don't know.

9873. You don't know that the cause is that they found it more profitable to breed some other kind of horse?—It has never been looked on as a breeding country at all.

9874. I take it from you that you put into two very broad categories the horses that Ireland may produce—first, the heavy cart-horse for heavy cart work; and for all other purposes horses got by thoroughbred sires?—Certainly, my lord.

9875. And you don't object to a horse nominally a half-bred horse provided he is really a thoroughbred?—No, nor private people keeping a half-bred horse if they choose. What I say is that the Government ought not to have half-bred horses. If a farmer or anyone else wishes to get a half-bred horse I have no objection to him doing so, but I don't think they should be subsidised.

9876. But, on the whole, you prefer a thoroughbred sire to any other?—There can be only one opinion; in fact, there is only one.

9877. Lord RATHDONNELL.—At former sittings of the Commission, Mr. Daly, there was evidence about the action of Hackneys. Do you care for that action at all?—No, my lord, I don't; they have only got action at one end.

9878. Have you seen many high-class Hackneys at shows and elsewhere?—No; I have not. The best class of Hackney I saw was a black horse shown here from the North of Ireland. I do not know where he came from.

9879. You have not seen many of them; you have not looked for that class of horse?—No; I have not.

9880. Would you prefer not to have such action in a horse that you were buying?—Well, I don't think you can find a thoroughbred horse with too much action, because he will carry it along with him. No matter what distance you go with him he won't lose his action.

9881. You mean shoulder action?—Yes.

9882. With fair knee action?—Yes.

9883. And going straight?—Yes.

9884. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Do you think that the conformation of the Hackney shoulder would not be almost invariably transmitted through any stock that he might get, and that it would never come into a riding shoulder?—I certainly say so. I don't believe anyone proposes the Hackney for a riding horse.

9885. It is what he may get eventually?—Not what he might get, Colonel.

9886. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I was going to ask Mr. Daly that very question—whether he ever saw a Hackney with a good shoulder action?—What we want to breed here is a horse that can be disposed of, and the people who come here to buy them are good judges. They don't grumble at prices, but they want the best. Hackney horses will not produce that.

9887. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You say you have got very good horses from two-year-old fillies, but your horses, of course, have been well done and well matured. We are told that in many places the young stock is very badly cared for, and therefore the two year olds are practically half starved themselves. In those conditions do you think she would throw a good foal unless the filly herself had been exceedingly well done, would it be advisable to breed from her?—I think the farmer is the man who should judge that. The man who wants to breed the animal, if he won't feed it, it is his look out. I think it is very hard to manage him there.

9888. Mr. WRENCH.—In the class for mares and foals recommended for local shows, would you require those foals and the produce of those mares to be got by registered sires?—I would certainly.

9889. Would you adopt the same principle as is now adopted by the Dublin Society?—I think so, sir.

9890. You said that you think that the American horses are the chief cause of the depression in second rate horses in Ireland. Do you think if we could tax the American horses the price of second rate horses would go up?—Decidedly.

9891. You are not very much afraid of motor cars?—I am not.

9892. You don't think they made a good start?—They may do some little harm; but I don't think they would affect us a bit. I think if something could be done with American horses—forty or fifty thousand a year running into this country and England makes a vast difference.

9893. Lord ASHTOWN.—What would you call the average price of American horses?—I would be only guessing at it. I should say about £30. There are some carriage horses—I would not say good ones—but there are carriage horses which sell at £80. I have heard so; I have not seen them. With good thoroughbred horses here they would breed good carriage horses. I have seeen carriage horses sell as high as £300 a piece.

9894. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—American?—No, Irish bred.

9895. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—How were they bred?—By thoroughbred horses. I sold a pair of horses the other day for £500, but they were hunters broken to the harness. I broke them to harness.

9896. CHAIRMAN.—Anything else you would like to say to the Commission, Mr. Daly?—Nothing I know of, unless you like to ask me any questions.

9897. Have you any suggestions to make?—Those are the only suggestions that I have.

9898. What you read out just now?—Yes my lord.

Mr. THOMAS O'BRIEN examined.

9899. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Limerick?—I do, my lord.

9900. And you are engaged in horse dealing?—Yes.

9901. What class of horses do you mostly deal in?—Hunters and high class carriage horses. Our business was established in 1852 in Limerick, and we deal very extensively in horses.

9902. Chiefly hunters and high class harness horses?—Yes; principally hunters and high class carriage horses.

9903. Where do you buy your horses?—We attend fairs, but buy most of our horses in districts from the breeders.

9904. In what parts of the country do you buy mostly?—In the counties of Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Cork, and Wexford. We also get a good many out of Meath and Mullingar district.

9905. Do most of your horses go to England, or what becomes of them?—They mostly go to England.

9906. Which do you deal most largely in, hunters or carriage horses?—About an equal number of each. I think we buy as many of one as of the other.

9907. Where do you sell your carriage horses?—We used to sell the majority to Wimbush of London. During the last four or five years we sold a large quantity to Messrs. East, who are large jobmasters in Curzon-street.

9908. Do they take as large a number as you can provide?—They would take twice as many if we could find them for them, but we find it very difficult to get the class of horse.

9909. How is the class of horse they require bred?—They are by thoroughbreds with few exceptions, and those horses, not a thoroughbred, are practically speaking thoroughbred, because through some accident they don't appear in the stud book, such horses as "Mayboy" and "Mackintosh" that Mr. Daly referred to.

9910. The hunters are produced in the same way?—Yes.

9911. The same class of animal only more adapted to harness than hunting?—Exactly

9912. Has the quality of horses you see at fairs deteriorated?—I should say they are a very fair average, but I don't see any particular improvement in the breed of horses for the last ten years.

9913. Do you see anything the other way?—Any horses as a rule got by thoroughbred horses of a good class with bone and substance, are always saleable and a good class of horse; we have a good many horses the country would be well without, so many inferior thoroughbred horses.

9914. You think some parts are served by inferior thoroughbreds?—I do, and that the Government ought to substitute these horses with high-class ones.

9915. How about the mares?—They are fairly good.

9916. As good as they used to be?—Well, I would scarcely say so. I think the farmers are not encouraged sufficiently by the Government to retain their good mares and cannot afford to pay the fees demanded, owing to the depression, and also to the competition of American horses; horses have deteriorated very much in price, owing to the American horses.

9917. Horses of a certain class?—Principally harness horses and utility horses.

9918. Would that American competition affect the price of the high-class harness horses?—No, I think not, they cannot compete with the high-class horse, they are not the same class of horse. I am in a position to voice the dealers. A short time ago I had an interview with them in England, and each and all condemn most emphatically the introduction of Hackney sires; they have been the ruin of hundreds in Yorkshire.

9919. That is their opinion?—Yes, and the opinion of breeders in Yorkshire whom I am acquainted with and deal with.

9920. You don't object to sires that by accident are not in the stud book, but might be called thoroughbreds—do you object to the half-bred horse with two or three strains of the thoroughbred?—Certainly, I have a decided objection to him—what you call the Clydesdale.

9921. Oh, no; a horse that is not in the stud book, but not absolutely thoroughbred?—No. In various districts we have horses, practically speaking, thoroughbred, and the farmers and gentlemen who breed from them know by experience they are valuable, because their produce commands a price and sells.

9921A. Do you give any pedigrees with your horses?—I always give the pedigree I get from the breeder or the party I purchase from.

9922. Do they attach much importance to the pedigree?—Yes, great importance.

9923. And do you attach much importance to it in buying?—I do. If a horse is got by a horse in the stud book, or a horse that escaped the stud book accidentally, I look on him as being 50 per cent. more valuable than if got by a horse not thoroughbred, but I attach no importance to a thoroughbred because he is in the stud book—I look on him as a horse first, and then if he is in the stud book all the better.

9924. Which part of the country do you know best?—I know every inch of Limerick, Cork, Tipperary, Clare, and Wexford. I had some good horses out of Wexford, and twenty years ago the best horses that used to come to our establishment came out of Kerry. That is a county in a notorious bad state as regards sires.

9925. Don't you get the same class of horse there now?—No; all the good sires and the good class of horses that were there for stud purposes are all dead and gone out of it, and have been replaced by a class of Clydesdales, and I believe, I am not so certain about Hackney sires; but the sires introduced by landlords and others who bought as a speculation have ruined the breed of horses in Kerry.

9926. Have they not found that out for themselves?—I should say they ought to.

9927. But they have not altered it?—No, it has not been altered.

9928. You have more competition from the foreigners than you used to have?—Well, yes, more come to Ireland now; they used to come to England before, but now a great many come here to buy horses.

9929. And we have been told that they buy principally mares?—Yes; principally mares.

9930. And what do you think would be the best method of improving horse-breeding generally. Do you think it would be sufficient if the Government or any society supplied the country with suitable stallions at suitable fees, or do you think it necessary also to do something to induce the farmers to keep their best mares?—I certainly think the farmers of Ireland require protection. Take them as a whole they are bad judges. I have seen mares come to my yard, worthless wretches not worth the groom's fees. They require protection and to be educated in the class of mares to breed from. They are influenced by friendship. If a gentleman is popular and well liked, and keeps a sire, they send mares to him; and secondly, if the fee is low they will send. If there is a horse standing at thirty shillings they go to him, and pass by a really higher class sire at forty shillings.

9931. Do you know any of the congested districts in any of the counties you deal in?—Not intimately enough to form any opinion of the horse-breeding schemes in those districts.

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9932. Have you seen the produce of any of the Hackneys in the congested districts?—I have seen some Hackneys in Ireland and a good many in England.

9933. What is your opinion?—I think if distributed to any extent in Ireland it would mean the ruin of a great national industry; it is a thing that has to be fostered if Irishmen are to make horse-breeding remunerative.

9934. You think high class hunters and carriage horses are the most profitable to breed?—I think they are the only two classes worth breeding in Ireland, and there is no doubt you will get a very large percentage of utility horses from that class of sire. Breeders aim at a high class of horse, then if they don't succeed in producing a high class horse they will get animals suitable for remounts and various other purposes at fairly remunerative prices.

9935. And for this purpose you think a thorough bred is best?—No other is suitable certainly. I think there can be no second question about it.

9936. I gather from you that if the Hackney blood was to penetrate through the country there is a danger that such buyers as come to you would not come to Ireland?—Certainly they would cease coming. They come to Ireland as an absolute necessity, because they cannot find what they want elsewhere.

9937. Do you know any of the districts in England where they breed Hackneys largely?—I know a good many farmers and dealers in Yorkshire and Lincoln and other counties which I have been speaking of, and they condemn in the most emphatic manner the Hackneys, and say they have ruined these counties to such an extent that horse rearing has been discontinued almost altogether. It would appear from information I received that thirty years ago the large obmasters had no occasion to come here, because they could buy in Yorkshire and in Lincoln: then they bred from thoroughbred sires something similar to ourselves. The Hackneys were afterwards introduced and then the horse-breeding was completely ruined.

9938. In your opinion do you think that Ireland has any natural advantages over England in producing the hunter and the high-class carriage horse?—Certainly, the climate has a good deal to do with it, and the limestone, the land; it is a well known fact that men bought two-year-old colts in Ireland and tried the experiment of leaving them there, and they grew on proportionally in size and bone, whereas they did not grow in the same way in England.

9939. Do you think there is any danger of the Hackney blood spreading throughout the country?—I think there is every danger. It is quite possible these Hackneys would find their way out of the congested district to the various counties where good horses are bred.

9940. The produce of them?—Certainly.

9941. Have you any thoroughbred horses of your own?—I have.

9942. Are they registered under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—One of them is: one is an old horse: I am really only keeping him because he is an old friend of mine; he is a horse called "Sheldrake," he is twenty-seven years old. "Mackintosh" cannot be registered because they call him a half-bred. He is by "Magregor" out of "Isabelle" by "Hobbie Noble," that ought to be good enough. I have a horse I bought from the Duke of Portland, called "Walmsgate": he is registered.

9943. Do you think the Royal Dublin Society's scheme has done good in Ireland?—Yes, I think so.

9944. And you approve of it?—I do to an extent, although there were a good many mistakes made when they were giving premiums to sires; there was a class of unsound wretches distributed through the country. A great many of those horses are still in the country and are patronized by ignorant, stupid people that don't know a horse from an ass.

9945. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say you supply a good many horses to Messrs. East and Wimbush?—Yes.

9946. East principally?—Yes; we supplied Wimbush with a great many horses, but for some years we have been supplying a good many to East.

9947. Both are men who deal in high-class carriage horses?—Yes.

9948. Have you served with the horses they require, and that you have found from them that the action that is necessary is able to be produced by thoroughbreds?—The best actioned horses I ever saw were got by thoroughbreds, and I would not expect to see a horse with superior action got by anything else.

9949. And have Messrs. East ever told you that they don't like for their purposes the produce of the Hackney blood?—They would not have them at all, sir. Furthermore, the American horses they find are no use; they don't stand on the stones of London; they can only get a year's work out of them; and secondly they are not high-class horses.

9950. In breeding in Ireland you would employ almost entirely thoroughbred horses?—Certainly, as a rule.

9951. What fee do you think the average farmer in Ireland could give and would give?—I consider the farmer in Ireland ought to be supplied with these sires at a small fee. I would agree with Mr. Daly; I think a sovereign would be sufficient. Owing to the depression, times are not very gay with them, and they cannot afford to pay much.

9952. Would you have one fee only, or would you graduate it?—I think the better class people ought to pay more. Valuation ought to have a good deal to do with it, but certainly the tenant farmers ought to get horses at very reduced fees.

9953. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—This horse, "Mackintosh," of yours gets some of the most beautiful stock in Ireland, and you probably take an interest in watching them at fairs?—Yes.

9954. I have seen great fine sixteen hands three-year-old colts by him, and they disappear—is that the class of horse that is bought by East and Wimbush?—That is about the stamp of horse.

9955. They give large prices?—They give large prices when you take into account that they buy the raw material, and that it takes twelve months before they are turned into a carriage horse.

9956. What age do they buy at?—Three year-olds off, four and five. They like four-year-olds; three years is rather far away from the market.

9957. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I take it, Mr. O'Brien, that you would approve of Mr. Daly's suggestion that the Government should buy really valuable stallions and place them about the country at the service of farmers?—Under certain circumstances I would approve of that—that is, provided the Government would depute men to buy sires that are thoroughly competent judges. There are a great many things to be looked into in the selection of sires.

9958. If the Government were to take that course don't you think it would interfere with private stallion owners?—As regards that, that is a thing I would not personally object to. You must take the interests of the country all round. It is one of the most remunerative industries we have now, the rearing of high-class colts.

9959. You think that if owners like yourself and Mr. Daly are prepared to run this risk, that owners elsewhere ought to be equally prepared for the benefit of the country?—Of course, private individuals can keep sires if they choose, then it will be open competition.

9960. It would not be exactly open competition; if the Government introduce a better class of sire, and if a private individual wants to buy a sire to gain profit by him he will have to be more particular in the selection?—Naturally he will have to be.

9961. You, yourself, are prepared to run the risk of having the income derived from your stallions reduced?—So far as I am concerned, I never derived profit from them—the people never scarcely pay me; there is only one way in which I ever derived profit, and that is by buying the produce. I got a good deal of money from the produce of some of my sires.

9962. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—As well as having Government stallions standing throughout the country, would you not allow privately owned stallions to be subsidised also by Government?—Yes, I should say so, horses of merit; they are not very numerous, but there is an occasional horse; you will find a horse or two in every county—not a thoroughbred but with four crosses of the thoroughbred, and in the district you will be able to find out his merits or demerits, and the Government might subsidise him with advantage.

9963. That is a half-bred horse?—I would not say a half-bred horse, he is more than half-bred.

9964. I mean a horse that is not in the stud-book?—Yes.

9965. You would subsidise any thoroughbred horse if he was a good one?—If he was a good one, but there are a great many thoroughbred horses which the Government ought to make an effort to buy up and shoot; they are ruining the districts in which they stand.

9966. Mr. WRENCH.—"Mackintosh" happens to be almost a typical horse for getting carriage horses—he has been very often quoted as an example?—That is an awkward question for me to answer.

9967. As a matter of fact would you not get men like East to give you a few pounds more for every horse got by "Mackintosh"?—Yes, certainly.

9968. He has been very successful as a sire?—I must decline to answer that question.

9969. Would you be in favour of licensing all stallions?—I think it would be a good idea.

9970. You think it would be sufficiently good for the people to get over the disagreeableness?—It would be a great thing for people to know they were sending their mares to sound horses.

9971. You have heard it suggested that brood mares ought to be registered?—I don't think it would work satisfactorily.

9972. Do you think that the foreign buyers pay attention to pedigree?—The buyer never buys a horse by his pedigree. He doesn't think of his pedigree when buying; not until he has him bought, or fairly bought.

9973. You sell a large number of horses to Messrs. East?—Yes.

9974. About what height do they buy them at?—At all heights; I have sold them horses 15 hands up to 17 hands.

9975. But the majority, at what height do they buy them?—As a rule they like horses 16 hands; from 15-3 to 16 hands is the highest they buy most horses at.

9976. They only buy a small one when he happens to be exceptionally good?—Yes.

9977. Have you any objection to say how many horses you sell to Messrs. East in a year?—A good many.

9978. Up to 100?—Sometimes 100, and sometimes less, but we could sell them 500 a year if we could find them.

9979. Do you know the total number they buy at present in the year?—I should say 500 or 600 in the year in Ireland.

9980. You would be surprised if it was a good deal less?—I would.

9981. You say you think the Hackneys have been the ruin of Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. Do you know Yorkshire well?—Fairly well.

9982. You know the Yorkshiremen well?—Yes.

9983. Can you explain why it is they go on breeding Hackneys when they do so much harm?—I think they have discontinued to a great extent; principally the people who did breed have discontinued. Of course there are new people springing up every day who may try to experiment, very much to their own disadvantage.

9984. Your opinion is that they don't breed in Yorkshire so much from Hackneys as they used?—Yes, but my opinion is based on the statements of Yorkshire dealers and farmers.

9985. And when you refer to Kerry you mean the district about Tralee chiefly?—Yes; Castleisland and back as far as Dingle and Castlemaine and Miltown.

9986. You have bought as far back as Dingle?—Yes; my father bought horses there for forty years, and I have a distinct recollection of good horses coming out of Kerry. For ten years I have not seen ten really good horses come out of Kerry.

9987. You know there have been a large number of cart horses introduced there?—A great many.

9988. You don't like the Clydesdale blood at all?—Certainly not.

9989. You would rather have it kept out of Kerry and Limerick?—Yes.

9990. You talked about the limits of valuation. If these stallions were bought you would make a difference to people of different valuation—have you made up your mind as to what the limits should be?—There are farmers farming as little as ten acres, and you can go lower still. I should say that farmers of 120 acres down should get encouragement, and should get sires cheap. I think it would be a bad precedent that the farmer of five-and-twenty acres that he would have to pay the same amount as the gentleman.

9991. You would be inclined to make a limit of 100, and under that a lower and above of a higher fee?—If the Government want to do the thing on a broad scale they will embrace everyone; but I think if they protect the tenant farmer it would be a step in the right direction.

9992. Would you tax American horses?—I never could understand why the Government of England tolerated the importation of these horses.

9993. If you could not tax them you would brand them?—That would amount to the same thing. It would not give people an opportunity of bringing them to Belfast and afterwards selling them as Irish horses.

9994. Do you know whether these jobmasters like East buy many American horses?—They have bought a good many, but now, as a rule, they won't buy them.

9995. They chiefly buy high-class horses?—They buy the best horses they can find.

9996. CHAIRMAN.—You are not in a position to say how many horses Messrs. East or anybody else buys in Ireland?—No.

9997. I gather from you that if the Government subsidise stallions they ought to charge a fee based in some way or other on the valuation—that is to say, charge a low fee to a poor man and a higher fee to a man better able to pay it?—That would be my opinion.

9998. At present, we have been told, there are a great many unsuitable thoroughbreds throughout the country, unsound, worthless animals, serving at low fees—fees that would not pay any private owner. That is a state of things you would like to see changed?—The good sires will stamp out that class of horse. It would be a good thing if the Government saw their way to buy a good lot of these horses and get rid of them before the ensuing season commences.

9999. Mr. WRENCH.—If the Government were to buy too many of these horses, don't you think a trade would spring up in breeding more to sell them to the Government?—I don't think so; the Government would depute a proper class of men to buy sires. The Government premium scheme was more ruinous to the breeding of horses in Ireland than anything else. How many worthless brutes were bought in England for

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fifty sovereigns by men to bring them over here and get a Government premium of £200 for them, horses with neither character or soundness.

10000. You think the present system is better?—Yes; I should say in the distribution of premiums I would spend the money on mares. You cannot put pressure on a farmer to keep a good mare. If he has a worthless brood mare that is not suitable he will retain her, and sell a good mare for 40 or 50 sovereigns that might be worth a gold mine to him if he kept her.

10001. Would you let the same mare win a prize two years running, or do you think it would be wise to restrict that?—I think it would be hard to stamp her out after one year.

10002. After two years you would draw a limit?—I think so; it might so happen that a mare might be led into the show yard four or five years in succession, and she might win.

10003. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any knowledge of the Kerry ponies?—A slight knowledge, my lord; as a rule they are very good.

10004. We have been told they have deteriorated of late years?—I think that is so.

10005. Have you ever bought horses out of Connemara or Kerry ponies by thoroughbreds?—We had some out of Castleisland, ponies by thoroughbreds, turned out very good horses.

10006. Were they sizeable horses?—Yes, they were.

10007. Is there anything else you would wish to say to the Commission?—No, the only interest I would have is if the Government would see their way to introduce good horses.

10008. Lord ASHTOWN.—Don't you think there is as much harm done by bad mares as bad sires?—Yes, but there is no way of preventing the farmer selling his mare. We called a meeting of the Agricultural Society in Limerick on the 3rd of October; it was numerously attended; it was one of the largest meetings I ever attended, and they were all unanimous in stamping out the Hackney sires. This is a copy of the resolution. (Resolution handed in.)

Mr. John Widger.

Mr. JOHN WIDGER examined.

10009. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Waterford?—Yes.

10010. Are you extensively engaged in dealing in horses?—Yes.

10011. You buy all over the country?—Yes, bar the North.

10012. And what class of horses do you deal in generally?—Hunters, harness horses, remounts and chargers.

10013. You heard what the last two witnesses have said, do you agree with them, generally speaking?—Yes.

10014. You think that the country generally is not sufficiently supplied with the proper stallions, and that the Government ought to step in and remedy that state of things?—I think so.

10015. And do you agree also that for the classes of horses you deal in, hunter, high class carriage horses, and remounts, the most suitable sire is the thoroughbred?—Yes.

10016. And would you approve of a half-bred sire, provided he was suitable and sound?—Yes.

10017. Which do you suppose you sell most of, harness horses or hunters?—Mostly for hunting, to England.

10018. England and foreign countries?—Dutch and Italians.

10019. Do you send many abroad?—Yes.

10020. To what countries?—Dutch and Italians.

10021. For army purposes?—Yes.

10022. I mean to the Governments or privately?—To the Governments; we sell about 500 a year to the Dutch Government, and 350 or 400 to the Italians.

10023. For remounts for troopers?—The Italian officers' horses; the Dutch remounts.

10024. What age do they buy them at?—Three to five-years-old.

10025. Do you know how the price the Dutch government pay for remounts compares with what the English pay?—About the same.

10026. I suppose for Italian chargers the price is higher?—Various prices from £50 to £100.

10027. What do they prefer?—Principally mares.

10028. And this kind of horses that you deal in do you think the supply is as good as formerly—do you find it as easy to get them?—Not so easy as years ago.

10029. You think there is a larger demand than ever?—I think so.

10030. And the supply is not larger?—No smaller.

10031. Do you think if the supply was considerably increased that the price would keep up?—I think so.

10032. Do you think there is any danger of the supply exceeding the demand?—No.

10033. And as to the inferior style of horse, the general utility horse, we have been told that the prices have gone down very much?—Yes, for a certain class of animal.

10034. Have you any experience of the American horses imported into the country?—I have not.

10035. Does their introduction interfere with you at all?—In the harness horses it does.

10036. Do you sell your harness horses to any particular firm?—No.

10037. Have you any knowledge or opinion as to the effect upon horse-breeding likely to be produced by the introduction of Hackney blood or any blood but thoroughbred?—I think Hackney blood would be the ruination of Ireland.

10038. What makes you think so?—Say 100 men go to a fair, ninety want hunters, and they can turn their hunters into harness horses; only ten of them will buy such horses as Hackney horses.

10039. And in your opinion is the quality of the mares as good as it used to be?—Not at all as good as it used.

10040. How do you account for that?—The pressure. If a farmer has got a good mare he will sell her.

10041. Was he not always inclined to sell her?—Not years ago, my lord.

10042. How do you think that could be remedied?—I think if a premium was given for mares it would be a remedy. Farmers would keep their mares.

10043. You consider it of just as much importance to consider a means of improving the mares as the stallions?—I think so.

10044. You understand the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Yes.

10041. Do you approve of it?—I do.

10042. And you think that if there was a large sum of money at the disposal of the Royal Dublin Society that it should be expended according to the present scheme?—I do.

10043. Is there no suggestion you would like to make as to how the system could be improved in any way?—No.

10044. Do you attach much importance to getting a pedigree with the horses you buy?—Oh, certainly.

10045. And you found those who buy from you require a pedigree?—Yes.

10046. Do you approve of any kind of registration of mares, or do you think it would be practicable?—I think it would be practicable.

10047. Do you think it would be useful?—I do.

10048. Do you know any of the congested districts on the western seaboard?—No, the south.

10049. Do you know the congested districts in Cork and Kerry?—Yes.

10050. Do you ever buy any horses there?—Yes.

10051. Have you seen any of the produce of the Hackney sires?—No, my lord, I have not.

10052. Have you ever bought horses out of Kerry ponies?—Yes.

10053. What class?—I have bought horses that grew into hunters, out of a Kerry pony by thoroughbreds.

10054. Do you know what thoroughbred is standing in Kerry now?—"Reveller."

10055. Is the county properly supplied?—Not with thoroughbreds.

10056. What has taken their place?—I don't know.

10057. It is not as well supplied as it used to be?—No.

10058. Do you agree with Mr. O'Brien that it is difficult to get as many horses out of Kerry now as formerly?—You cannot get them.

10059. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think you can trace any of the old strain of Irish mares in Wexford or Waterford?—Yes.

10060. Mares you can trace back?—Yes, for four or five generations.

10061. Any number of them?—Yes.

10062. What are they like? Could you describe them?—A working mare; legs like a working harness mare; a hunting mare.

10063. Any particular characteristics?—No, nothing particular.

10064. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Did you ever buy a horse in the North at all?—No.

10065. You do not go northward?—No.

10066. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—What would you consider a sufficient premium to offer for mares to induce farmers to keep them?—I think £20.

10067. Do you think that would be sufficient?—I think so.

10068. You would advocate local shows all over the country?—I would.

10069. For small farmers?—Yes.

10070. I wanted to ask you with regard to the question of the remounts—you supply this Government and foreign Governments with a good many?—Yes.

10071. You have your representatives in every fair almost in the South of Ireland?—Yes.

10072. Whenever you see a likely horse you buy it?—Yes.

10073. And you keep for that purpose a large area of ground on which you store these horses until they are required?—Yes.

10074. Would that be a remunerative business unless it was carried on on a very large scale, with the different classes of horses you buy—because you do not buy all of the one class; you buy higher priced horses and various classes?—Yes.

10075. Without you did that would it pay you to keep that ground, that large area as a farmer would keep it for bullocks? You keep your horses there on the same plan as a farmer buys and fattens his bullocks; would that pay you unless you did it on a very large scale, and bought various classes of horses, and had various outlets for them?—No; it would not pay me.

10076. You don't know anything about the foreign countries beyond these two, the Dutch and Italians, apparently yourself?—No.

10077. Do you know anything about the Germans?—No.

10078. We are told they take a lot of mares out of the country?—Yes, for private use; none for the Government that I am aware.

10079. The German dealers are not Government dealers; they are private?—Yes.

10080. Do not they to a certain extent sell a number of these to the German Government?—I have never heard.

10081. They take chiefly the mares?—Yes.

10082. We are told that if the Hackney is introduced, that in the course of one or two crosses it will be difficult to tell him?—I don't think so.

10083. Mr. Daly says not, but a great many gentlemen say that it would?—I do not think so.

10084. You have no practical knowledge of the Hackney?—I bought a few in my time.

10085. What is your objection to the Hackney?—My objection is that they are not hunting made; no shoulders.

10086. With regard to their action?—I could not stand their action at any price.

10087. You consider you could get a sufficiency of action practically for show as well as for useful purposes with a thoroughbred horse?—I think so.

1088. You think for the trooper trade it would be a great mistake to get any of the Hackney blood into it?—Oh, certainly.

10089. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You are a stallion owner, too?—Yes.

10090. Do you agree with Mr. Daly and Mr. O'Brien in advocating the purchase of high class stallions by the Government?—Certainly.

10091. Although that might to some extent affect your private interest as a stallion owner?—It may and it may not.

10092. In any case you would advocate it?—Yes.

10093. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said you sold 500 horses on an average to the Dutch?—Yes.

10094. All remounts?—Yes.

10095. What are their particular requirements, what size?—From 15.1½ to 15.3.

10096. Do they mind whether they are geldings or mares?—They don't mind.

10097. They buy them either way?—Yes.

10098. Would you be in favour of registering mares?—Yes.

10099. What do you mean by that exactly?—To give premiums to every good mare that would come in belonging to the farmers; advertise, and have all these mares shown, and give premiums to the best.

10100. Selected mares at local shows?—Yes.

10101. And those mares considered qualified by a competent committee or by judges you would have registered as to their breeding?—Yes.

10102. That registration you would have carried out in the county?—Yes.

10103. What half-bred stallions would you also register?—Such horses as "Reliable," "After Dark," "Mayboy," and that class.

10104. You keep a half-bred sire yourself, don't you?—No.

10105. I thought you owned a horse called "Morton"?—Not now; a couple of years ago.

10106. You sold him?—Yes.

10107. He got good stock, did he not?—No, that is the reason I sold him.

10108. You did not like him?—No.

10109. How many years did you keep him?—Two years.

10110. Did you sell any of the stock got by him to the Italians?—No.

10111. You did not sell him because his dam happened to be in the Hackney Stud-book?—I saw some of his yearlings, that is why I sold him.

10112. Where is he now?—He has gone into the county Cork.

10113. Did you buy him from Mr. Barling?—Yes.

10114. He was by a thoroughbred horse?—Yes

10115. Dam thoroughbred?—No, half-bred.

10116. You said you bought in the congested districts of Cork. Where did you buy?—All through Cork.

10117. What part of the congested districts, though?—Middleton.

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10118. That is not congested. Did you go no further than Midleton?—I travelled all over Cork.

10119. Did you go as far as Schull?—I go to Bandon.

10120. And in Kerry how far do you buy; do you go beyond Tralee?—No, not beyond Tralee.

10121. CHAIRMAN.—Do you find you can get the horses you require for about the same price now as formerly, or are they dearer or cheaper?—About the same.

10122. The price keeps up?—Yes.

10123. Is there any suggestion you would like to make to the Commission?—The only thing I have to say is that they should tax American horses coming to England.

10124. LORD RATHDONNELL.—With regard to the local shows of mares that have been held under the Royal Dublin Society, you approve of them?—I do.

10125. At these shows of mares would you give a few large prizes, or spread the money over a greater number of mares, which of course means smaller prizes?—I would prefer spreading the money over.

10126. You mentioned a sum of £20 as a premium?—I would say £20, £10 and £5.

10127. That would be three prizes?—Yes.

10127. You would not advocate spreading the money over in smaller sums?—No.

10128. You would prefer to have three or four large prizes?—Yes.

10129. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Do you think £20 would be enough to induce the general run of farmers, who had a good mare to keep her, on the chance of getting this £20?—I think so.

After the adjournment, Lord RATHDONNELL in the chair.

Mr. Thomas Meleady.

THOMAS MELEADY, Mount-street, Dublin, examined.

10130. CHAIRMAN.—You are a horse dealer, and live in Dublin, I believe?—Yes, sir.

10131. In what part of Ireland do you buy your horses generally?—The principal part of my horses that I buy is in the South, but I travel all parts unless the North—I don't travel much in the North.

10132. In your opinion, is it harder to get a high class horse than it was in former years?—It is far harder, sir; I find it a great deal harder—they are very scarce to what they used to be long ago.

10133. To what do you attribute that?—My opinion is this, there are so many foreign dealers come that are judges, and buy them when they are young, and if men have a good beast now they will keep it for a foreign dealer, and send it away to such as Wimbush, or those men that buy these good class mares and hunters, and send them away when they are young.

10134. By foreign dealers, you mean English and foreign?—I mean that.

10135. Do you think the price of high class horses is higher than it used to be in former years?—I think the price of a high class hunter is higher than ever it was.

10136. Do you consider the mares throughout the country generally are as good as they used to be?—They are not, nor near, sir.

10137. How do you account for that?—I will tell you, the poverty of the country, sir. When a poor man that had a good mare was going into a fair to sell his yearling, or two-year old, or three-year old, he led in the mother along with the colt, and the dealer met him, or the man that was a judge, and said, "I won't buy your colt, I will buy your mare." The poor man wanted the money, he said, "I will give you £30 or £35," as the case might be. "I will take it, and I will keep my colt." Then some other man might come and buy the colt, and the owner would buy a cheap mare—let it be spavined, curbed, hollow-backed, as the case might be. He bought something cheap to take home to do his work and to breed, and all our good cattle went away—all the best of them that poor men could keep; of course, rich men would not sell their good cattle.

10138. Then, I suppose, we may take it that you consider the sound mares have been sold out of the country to a great extent, and the unsound ones kept to breed from?—A great many; anything was good enough to breed.

10139. That applies to the farming class?—I count that is why there are so many bad horses and poor mares in the country.

10140. Have you had much experience with respect to the Army remount horses?—These last twenty years I had; part of my time I bought 400 to go away to the Dutchmen—400 horses a year. I was the man that principally bought for "French George," and when he died I bought for them; after that I got an order from the British Government, and I am supplying them since.

10141. Were many of the horses that you have bought taken away out of the country by foreign Governments?—A great many, but not so much these last few years.

10142. Could you tell us how the price given by foreign dealers compares with that given by our own Government for horses?—I can tell you; when I commenced to buy for them first, when French George died, they gave me £48 for strong ones, and £44 for light cavalry.

10143. Mr. WRENCH.—That is the Dutch, is it?—Yes, the foreign men; that was my price when I commenced first—£44 and £48.

10144. CHAIRMAN.—Forty-eight pounds for the strong horses, and £44 for the lighter?—Yes, what they call riding artillery horses.

10145. How does that compare with the price our own Government gives?—Well, our own Government gives £41 15*s.*, and you have to deliver them; for the foreign Governments we have not to stir them out of the place, they even pay the men that brings them to the boat.

10146. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You don't get £41 15*s.* to deliver in Ireland?—Not quite so much.

10147. Sixteen shillings to deliver in Ireland?—From you, sir; we have to deliver them, that is the reason the £1 15*s.* comes in.

10148. That is in England?—Yes, sir.

10149. But it is only 16*s.* in Ireland?—That is all.

10150. The foreigners buy from you in the yard, and you have no further responsibility?—We have no more to do with them; once they take them in the yard and brand them, we are done with them—they pay the man to bring them to the boat.

10151. CHAIRMAN.—How do the prices of the present day compare with the prices in former days, that is, as regards the export to foreign Governments?—I have nothing at all to do with that—nothing to do with it now; I have never paid for a horse to go a yard unless I sell them to the British, and then I must deliver them, but when a foreign man buys them we never have to pay a penny.

10152. You told us just now that you got £48 and £44 for the horses that you exported to foreign Governments some years ago, how does that compare with the present prices you can get from foreign Governments?—Well, they don't give us quite so much now, £42 and £43, if they like the horses, they don't make a regular price with you; if they like a lot of horses

you may ask them a price and they won't refuse you, they won't make a deal with you at all, they will say, "Very well, I will have them."

10153. You mean that formerly there was a set price given?—That was the price they commenced with me.

10154. And now they buy independently of that?—They buy everywhere now.

10155. They make their own bargain?—They make their own bargain in this way, that if they don't like the horse they won't give you as much now. "I will cut you a sovereign," or half a sovereign, as the case may be, and our expenses are as great—generally £42 and £43 the small ones, and the large ones you can charge £45 or £50 for them if they like them.

10156. What has caused that decrease in the price?—I think myself the reason of that is, I am not sure, but my opinion is that there are men who have taken up the supplying of the foreign armies; they want to buy them as cheap as they can for themselves the way they will have profit—that is my opinion of that.

10157. Then you mean to say that there are some individuals between you and the foreign government?—Of course there is—don't you know there is very well; what will pay their expenses, or how will they come and buy horses here and deliver them there? I sell to ten or fifteen different men that take them away.

10158. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—If you will forgive me, he does not understand what you mean—there are men between him and the foreign dealers?—There are men get contracts there and must come here to fill their contract, and they have to come to me and the like of me to help them to get them.

10159. CHAIRMAN.—Do you put that down to any deterioration in the horse flesh?—I do not; but you asked me the question, and I am answering it as well as I know how.

10160. Do the foreign dealers take mares in preference to geldings?—They do; money won't stop them if they get a nice mare that goes well and wears her tail, and carries herself well, and has good shoulders—money won't stop them. Many a one the Colonel took from me that you would get £80 or £90 for from a foreign dealer in a fair.

10161. Have you had any experience of the American horses that have been imported here?—Never, sir.

10162. Never seen them?—I saw some of them.

10163. What do you think of them?—I could not give any opinion of them, for I had no dealings with them. I would not buy them at all.

10164. Are they likely to affect the breeding of horses in Ireland in any way?—They have affected the price of horses, that is, the middling class of horses.

10165. In what way?—They don't want them so much where they are bringing them to Scotland and London every other day; they don't want cabbers or bussers not half as much as they used—that is my opinion going about the fairs.

10166. What part of Ireland do you travel in chiefly looking for horses?—Well, there is forty years I am going through the county Galway, county Mayo, Wicklow, Wexford, and all parts of the South, as far as Skibbereen; there is not a county or a place that you could mention but I was in—I am all my lifetime going in trains.

10167. You know all the West?—I do, sir, well.

10168. Have you any experience with regard to the horses imported by the Congested Districts Board?—The Hackney horses, sir?

10169. Yes, and others?—Not so much; I never bought many of them, not more than two or three in my life; they had not age enough for me during my time there. The ponies I buy in that country must be six or seven years old—I don't think there are many of those there yet, there may be now.

10170. Can you buy many horses in that district?—Sometimes you could, but, of course, not good horses. Now, if you wanted a nice polo pony, I remember the time you could go down to a fair there and bring ten or eleven out of the fair. Every month I went into Belmullet for these twenty-five years, and we never came home with less than ten or eleven good polo ponies out of it.

10171. And you say you cannot get them out of it now?—No, not in that country; I left ne'er a good one in it that ever I seen.

10172. Do you travel down there now?—Not so much; we don't want so many polo ponies, and now they want a different class of polo pony. At that time it was 14 hands and now it is 14.2. Now it is a little thoroughbred horse we want like "Watchspring" long ago, or these little horses that win races for gentlemen and officers, as the case might be, when the season is over. A 14.2 pony down there is neither a pony or a horse now. If you get a 14.2 pony now round Wicklow or Wexford you want that, but you don't want a half-bred one now—they are no use, those small half-bred ponies—you must have a thoroughbred pony now. When I went down there first there was a breed of ponies in it that you could get up on and ride them off the grass 30 miles across the mountains, as I often did from Belmullet into Ballina, and they would never tire, without a feed of oats, nor did not know what the taste of oats was.

10173. Have you any plan in your mind by which you could revive that stamp of pony?—I have not; only at that time there was a breed of ponies there, wherever they went to—I took the weight of them out of it; they had heads, necks, and shoulders like thoroughbred horses, the best shape you ever saw, with poverty, the greatest poverty you ever saw, but they are gone out of that country altogether. I often spent a week or a fortnight looking for polo ponies there, and you would get good ones, and the moment I came home some of the gentlemen I used to sell them to would say, "Tom, there is a Belmullet pony!" They used to call them Achill ponies—they came in from a place called Achill.

10174. You have no idea then of how to revive this breed of ponies there with an eye to getting the sort of pony you require?—I could indeed, sir.

10175. Well, we would like to hear it?—The mixture of ponies with Scotch horses that got into the county Galway and county Mayo ruined that country, and they are neither ponies nor horses, and there is a great many through every county as well, for they sell them as foals, and they went to Wicklow and Wexford and ruined that country. The Scotch horses came here when I was a very young boy; they were very easy to tire, hairy-legged horses, the farmers got them cheap and gave them to mares, and then the foals were soft hairy-legged bits of ponies and no use, not the old Irish class of pony I am speaking of those I used to get in Achill and Belmullet. Get a good-shaped mother, for without a good mould you won't have a good horse, and then give them a good small thoroughbred horse and you will get a good pony. Don't give them a crooked one with spavins, with a bad back and loins, but one with good colour and good flat legs, with good head, neck and shoulder, and you will surely have a good foal. How is it that in every place I ever get a "Watchspring" pony I bought it?

10176. I take it you think that a small thoroughbred horse is the sort of article that ought to be mated with the mare of that district?—In the county Mayo sir, yes; but there is a great deal of mares that should not be allowed near a horse at all, ruining the country, and half the people in that country does not know the differ; they think anything is good enough to have a foal. In a great many counties there should be a regular system to register mares and to get good half-bred mares—I don't mean thoroughbred—half-bred mares with good legs, and good colours, and good backs, and do away

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with all the rubbish that is eating what good horses should get, and the poor man does not know the differ. Then you might go into a fair and get a remount, where you will have to go to five or six now before you will get two, and some that you think is good they won't take from you.

10177. Have you much experience of high-class harness horses—have you exported much of them from Ireland?—I never did; but my opinion is this, if you give a good mare a good horse, if you have not a hunter you have a harness horse.

10178. With regard to the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, do you think that that has had any beneficial effect or the reverse?—I cannot exactly answer you that question; I don't really understand what you mean.

10179. Well, under the Royal Dublin Society's horse-breeding scheme, do you think that the horse-flesh in Ireland has improved at all?—Well, in parts they have; you know you cannot expect a good horse to get a good foal unless he gets a good mare. Remember, I am telling you, sir, that if you had the best horse that ever walked and gave it to a bad mare you won't get a good foal; you might get one good one and ten bad ones—you must have the dam you must have the mould.

10180. We would like to hear your ideas as to how you would improve the horses in Ireland—can you give us any?—Begor! my opinion is that I would register the mares and the horses, and I would take the bad ones from the poor people and allow them a little for them as the case might be, and give them a good mare and make them keep it, and a good one is as easy to feed as a bad one, and unless you do that you will never change it, because they will be sticking to what they have and they cannot help it, they have not judgment. Some of them are too poor to keep a good mare, and more of them would rather feed cattle. Unless there is something done that way to register the mares and foals and make them keep them, it is the only way that I suggest, sir, for I know poor people who are not able to keep a mare and foal and have very big tracts of land. I do, indeed, sir.

10181. You think there ought to be some inducement held out to make the farmers in Ireland keep their sound good mares, and that is the way you suggest?—Yes, by giving them to them. I would not want you to give them for nothing. Allow them something for the bad ones, and send them away to work cabs or something, and whatever was over give it to them, for there are some of them really would do those things if they knew how or had judgment enough, and then they would see the differ.

10182. Do you think the class of stallions in the country is fair?—Well, there are a great many of them very good. The class of stallion you must get is a good thoroughbred stallion with good bone, not weedy lads that goes this way and that. You must get them to go straight and well. If you want to improve the hunters and harness horses, as the case may be, you must get that class of a horse or mare; but as long as I remember any mare was good enough to give a horse, and that is what ruined the country.

10183. And you think the thoroughbred horse is the right stamp of horse?—I see a power of them very good in my opinion.

10184. Would you be in favour or not of breeding from a half-bred?—I would, sir. Well, you know, that is for its class. We cannot do without a big draft horse. That is another class, but for a hunter or harness horse a good, big, strong half-bred mare that has good points about it, and goes well, and gets an entire, you cannot miss. But the poor people cannot get those things unless they are helped. They are getting nothing for the corn or anything, not as much as would pay the men.

10185. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Mr. Meleady, from your evidence I rather gather that you look on the mare as being the most important of the two?—I do, sir.

10186. Then, if any public money is to be used for horse-breeding, you would rather spend it on the mare—on keeping good mares in the country—than on keeping a good stallion?—I would not say that exactly, sir; but I say there is no use in giving a good stallion to a bad mare. Without the mares you will never improve.

10187. Then the improving of the mares, would not that entail a good deal of expense; would not that require a large amount of money?—I think it would, but at the end it would pay; and I will tell you the reason why, for my experience is that the poor countryman is robbed feeding cattle that are no good and that they cannot get sale for, and a great deal of that comes from the American and foreign horses that are coming into this country now.

10188. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—By cattle you mean horses?—I mean horses.

10189. Lord ASHTOWN.—When you say cattle you mean horses?—I do, sir; I mean the bad cattle.

10190. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What would you suggest with regard to keeping mares in the country; how would you suggest to do it?—I would make the men keep them; if they had a good mare to register her and make them keep her.

10191. How would you do that?—If she was registered they would have to keep her, unless she died, or sell her. There are people in the country that would breed a lovely foal and keep a good mare if they were able and had plenty of means of feeding her and good land; but they are not able to afford to keep one. If you compel him to buy one and make him keep it that would not be fair, for I don't think the poor man is able to do it; but if he is helped to buy one, why would it not be registered, and make him keep it, and give him the produce of it?

10192. You would be obliged to pay him to keep this mare?—You were asking me my opinion to improve the horses that I see, and that is the way you would improve them.

10193. By spending money and keeping the mares in the country?—Yes, and not let them go away where all our good mares and horses have gone.

10194. Do you advocate entirely thoroughbred horses in the country, or would you advocate any others?—I would like no other but a good thoroughbred and half-bred mare, a good one; and if you do that you will have plenty of good horses—of course I don't mean farmers' horses. If you want a high-class horse that is how you want to get him. I don't want the mother to be thoroughbred at all.

10195. Now, as regards the Hackney blood that we have heard a great deal about, do you believe that if these Hackneys are kept in the congested districts that their blood will not in time permeate the country; it will come through—it will do harm throughout the country?—You ask my opinion and I will give it. I don't think it will improve the country.

10196. Do you think the ordinary buyer in two or three generations will be able to detect the Hackney strain or not?—A judge will.

10197. The dealer will, you think?—Yes.

10198. But you think the ordinary buyer will not?—Well, there are ordinary buyers that want only one horse in a year or two as good judges as anyone; but I would know these horses. They have not the same shoulders, the same neck, or the same way; they have only a harnessy head, neck, and shoulders. The shoulders are not put on them right; they have not the same back rib as our own good thoroughbred horse or mare.

10199. And so you think that no Government money ought to be spent on the Hackney blood?—I won't say much about that. That is not my business; but I am only telling you what I know.

10200. Would you like it to be done or would you not?—To tell you the truth, I would not care much for them.

10201. You would rather they were not used in the country?—I would, sir—I won't deny my mind.

10202. Lord ASHTOWN.—You say the foreign dealers have more or less depleted the breed of Irish horses?—The power of our good mares are away.

10203. You mentioned Messrs. East and Wimbush?—Yes, those are very good buyers.

10204. Do they buy mares?—Anything that steps.

10205. Mares or geldings?—Anything that steps and has good neck, head, and shoulders, they buy them.

10206. You would hardly call them foreign?—No, but they buy for foreign people.

10207. They buy to sell again?—Yes; I am only telling you the people to buy good ones.

10208. You say you bought a lot of Belmullet ponies for polo ponies?—I did.

10209. You don't buy any now?—Not quite so much; that country is wed out of them.

10210. What spoiled them?—I suppose the breed ran out; I bought all the good ones I saw in it.

10211. You mean you bought all the good ones and spoiled the breed?—I took ten or fifteen a week, but the people will tell you Meleady took all the good ponies out of the country.

10212. In fact you spoiled the breed yourself?—A good deal.

10213. You think the Scotch horses injured them?—A good deal of it. I remember the time you could go into a fair and buy beautiful mares and horses, ten and fifteen in every fair; now you cannot get ten or fifteen in ten fairs of the same good class.

10214. In that district?—In other districts as well as there.

10215. I am talking specially of the pony district?—The pony district is settled; they are not near as good as they were.

10216. Now I don't want you to say what price you give, but in olden times before the breed was spoiled about what price would the average pony go for untrained—I suppose you bought them untrained?—I did not. I would buy them now untrained if I saw a good one, but in those times I would not. As fast as we bought them we could sell them.

10217. They were broken then?—Yes.

10218. Now you buy them unbroken?—I do if I saw a good one, but I seldom do.

10219. I think you said a bad mare could not breed a good horse?—I did not.

10220. I understood you to say so?—I think not.

10221. I understood you to say if a man had a bad mare?—I did not, sir, excuse me.

10222. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said it was not much use putting a bad mare to a good horse?—Yes, sir.

10223. Lord ASHTOWN.—You said that people that had a big tract of land sometimes could not keep a good mare—why was that?—I will tell you: they have a big tract of land, and sometimes the rent is a little too heavy, and when they come to pay the wages and rates and the support of their houses they find that they have not enough to meet the landlord, and they must make it some way; they must sell their mare to meet it.

10224. But you think if a fellow kept a good mare and a big farm, that the better the mare the better the progeny?—That is all right, sir; what you say is true, but a drowning man will grab at a straw; when he wants his rent he must sell something, and if he had a mare and that he had to keep her because she was registered he should keep her.

10225. I see what you mean now; you mean if a man has a good mare he will be tempted to sell her to pay the rent?—He would.

10226. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—The foreign dealers prefer the mares to the geldings?—They do.

10227. And take a great many out of the country. Do you know which country they chiefly go to—is there any country that takes them more largely than others?—I could not suggest that to you, sir.

10228. Do you know anything about the Swiss buying?—No, sir; I don't know them at all.

10229. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you say that there were a great many ponies bought in Wicklow?—I buy them any place I see a good one.

10230. Are there good ones there?—If you see one it is a good one, but it is very seldom you would see a polo pony in those places.

10231. I thought you said you did buy them there?—So I do, any place I meet them I buy them.

10232. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Do you think any horse except a thoroughbred horse is a fit animal to breed a trooper or riding horse for any country or under any condition?—You will see half-bred horses get good foals sometimes.

10233. What do you mean by a half-bred horse—a horse that is not actually thoroughbred?—Yes.

10234. But I mean with a cross of the Clydesdale and Hackney and various other crosses?—Oh, no, no; I would not think of that at all; you are asking me my opinion and I will give it, I may be wrong.

10235. But the troopers that you buy, what are they almost invariably by?—The weight of them would be thoroughbred horses.

10236. Well, the foreign dealers I suppose would not take them unless they got quality and right action, would they?—A foreigner, if you have a good mare, will give you £70 or £80 for her, or £100 if she is a good mare.

10237. But then he would not call her a good mare unless she had quality and right, nice action, would he?—He would not, nor would I have her if she had not.

10238. You can only get that from the thoroughbred strain?—Yes, sir.

10239. Mr. WRENCH.—Are the Dutch the largest foreign buyers?—To me they are.

10240. Do you know whether they have been buying troopers from Canada lately?—I do not.

10241. You know Captain Foot?—I do well.

10242. Would he know?—He would.

10243. Is he the chief man for the Dutch Government buying here—does he chiefly buy from you?—Always.

10244. Have you ever bought any ponies in Donegal?—I never did, but I bought ponies in Enniskillen.

10245. From Sligo?—Yes.

10246. You have not been further north than that?—No; I was once in Derry.

10247. You did not buy many ponies there?—No; I was badly off for remounts, and went there once, but I bought none of them.

10248. What price used you give in the old days for Belmullet ponies, roughly speaking?—From £16 to £18, or may be £30, if I could get a good one.

10249. But an average price of £16 or £18?—Yes; but the expense was dreadful out of it—£7 for a waggon home and bringing them 30 miles across a mountain.

10250. What did it put on per head bringing them up to Dublin?—30*s.*

10251. Did you buy them under 3 or 4 year old?—No, I would not buy 4 year old ponies, they would be no use to me.

10252. You would not buy anything under 5 year old?—No.

10253. If the same class of ponies were bred in Belmullet now, could you afford to give a bigger price for them?—I could, if it was a good one—money would not stop me.

10254. For the same class could you afford to give a bigger price now than you did then?—Well, no, not a bit more.

10255. You would not give more than on an average £16 to £18?—£16 or £18, and bring them up here and feed them for a while, for they would be poor.

10256. It would take six months to get them into condition?—It would not—it would take three at least.

10257. You have seen many of the mares in Belmullet—do you think it would be possible to breed

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from the mares left there now the class of polo ponies that is now wanted?—If you met a good one in it you could breed a good polo pony off them; if you met the good old sort and gave her a thoroughbred horse you could breed a Grand National one from them.

10258. Do you think there are many of those good ones left?—Not to my knowledge.

10259. And you had an opportunity of seeing them all in Belmullet fair?—I had. My son and I are going there thirty years, the 15th of every month; until the last two or three years we did not go at all.

10260. And did you go up to the Mullet and through the country?—We did, every place—Crossmolina, Newtowngore, Ardnaree, and Sligo, and I should be there to-day.

10261. You are in favour of registering mares?—Yes; if you got a good mare I would make them keep her.

10262. And you think it is important that a mare should be a good goer?—A straight goer; I would not want her to be a high goer.

10263. And you think that a good half-bred mare is the right mare to look for for a brood mare to cross with a thoroughbred horse?—I do, sir, for a hunter or for a harness horse; I don't mean for a draught.

10264. Yes, we are talking of hunter and harness horses now?—Yes, or for a remount.

10265. How would you breed those mares?—I will tell you very easy. If I had the ways of doing it I would send a couple of men that would be a judge, and I would buy a good mare everywhere I could see her, and register and give her to a farmer, and tell him he should keep her. You give him the produce of her and let him work her as he liked, but keep her in a proper manner.

10266. You would buy a good mare and station her in the country with a farmer who would keep her?—Yes, but good big mares, no small ones.

10267. Would there be any cart horse blood in them or Clydesdale?—Very little; of course you may buy them with that if you like, but you need not if you don't like.

10268. You think you could get good mares without any Clydesdale blood?—If you like good half-bred mares.

10269. Would you be in favour of registering Clydesdales?—What occasion would you have of doing that?

10270. I am asking you would you?—I would not.

10271. You think there is no occasion for them in this country?—Yes, for farmers.

10272. What would you do for the farmers who want to breed work horses?—I don't see who would be going to run away with them, with the blood; there is no foreigner comes here to run away with them.

10273. But you would not help them to breed better ones?—I don't know where you would get better ones than a good draught mare and draught horse for the work.

10274. You think the draught horses in Ireland are as good as they can be?—I have not much experience of them, any I see are good enough.

10275 You don't think they want any improvement?—They may be improved, but I don't breed much of them.

10276. I want to know what you would do for farmers who want to breed that class?—A farmer knows his own mind; the best working horse is the best he can keep.

10277. You would not like to advise except about hunters and harness horses?—That is it what I want myself and remounts.

10278. CHAIRMAN.—I think I understood you to say that in years gone by you had found ponies that had originally come from the West, you found them in Wexford and Wicklow?—I did not, sir; but I said that they sent the foals out of that country, yearlings and two year olds and six months old foals, all through Wicklow and Wexford and the country, and destroyed it.

10279. Was that from the West?—From the county Galway and the county Mayo; how many thousands did I see coming and waggons and selling them yearlings and two-year-olds—that is what I said.

10280. I think that was the question I asked you whether they came from the West?—They did, sir; they came from the county Galway and county Mayo, anywhere that they bought a poor little thing; they brought it up there and sold them, sold some as two and three-year-olds and they only six months old.

10281. That was after they introduced all sorts of Clydesdale and mongrel blood in the West?—I am telling you my opinion. What destroyed the ponies first in that country was the Clydesdale mixed up through them; of course they have found the differ now and they are not in it at all, for they would not have them.

10282. I take it that it was the produce of these stallions that came to Wicklow and Wexford and destroyed the ponies?—That is the very thing.

10283. Then you think that the young horses from the West are likely to permeate through all the other horse-breeding districts in Ireland?—Well, they did, as long as I remember; they are coming up and going to England too.

10284. Do I understand you to say that you do not approve of Hackney sires?—I did, sir. I said of course that I had no experience of them whatsoever, that I would rather have a good thoroughbred horse than the Hackneys, because you can breed as good a harness one off a thoroughbred horse as you can off a Hackney. A good thoroughbred horse if you have him will stay and go where the other will throw up the sponge when they go a pace, and you would not like to be left on the road yourself on a dark night.

10285. Have you seen any of the Congested Districts sires in the West?—I did.

10286. What is your opinion of them?—They are very nice horses, carries themselves well and goes well, and what any man would buy, that is if he wants to show off, such as to go through a town or step and go; their action is too high to stay; I would rather have one that would skittle on the ground lower.

10287. What do you think causes that?—Something in their blood, I suppose, makes them step high.

10288. Good shoulders?—No, if they had they could not step; you never saw a good shouldered one stepping high yet—hardly.

10289. Then are you afraid of the produce of those horses percolating through the other parts of Ireland and doing damage to horse-breeding?—No, I think not.

10290. Have you found ponies in Wicklow?—I did, sir; but what harm will they do?

10291. You do not like the Clydesdale cross in the ponies?—I did not, nor I would not have them at all.

10292. But you don't think the Hackney blood will do any harm coming Wexford way in the ponies?—I don't know, sir; I did not prove that yet.

10293. Would you like it?—I would not.

10294. Lord ASHTOWN.—About the cross of the thoroughbred horse and the half-bred mare, you say you are in favour of the thoroughbred stallion?—Yes, sir.

10295. If you keep on crossing with a thoroughbred stallion, won't you in the end get to a thoroughbred mare and thoroughbred stallion, and you will have to keep substance up?—Indeed you will, you will have to keep substance up.

10296. Would you not be in favour of a half-bred horse now and then?—Indeed, they will run into very close blood after some years.

10297. How would you remedy that?—I could not suggest that. If I could tell you I would, but I don't know how you could manage that.

10298. About Hackney blood—do you deal only in riding ponies? Do you deal in harness ponies at all,

stepping ponies?—Yes, I would like a good stepping pony.

10299. Don't they sell very well?—As well as anyone; but I would like they would stay.

10300. You would not mind buying a stepping pony?—I would not if I could get a few pounds profit.

10301. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Talking about the breeding of polo ponies, it has been brought up here very often, you as a polo pony salesman and I as a polo pony buyer, may possibly have two different ideas, but do you think you can in any way ensure the breeding of polo ponies?—The only way that I could suggest is a small thoroughbred horse.

10302. What is the first essential in these days for a polo pony—an absolute necessity?—The first thing is you must have a polo pony, the same as a hunter, with good shoulders and good riding points.

10303. I don't mean the formation, but in his blood in the game?—You must have him handy.

10304. You can make him handy afterwards, but you must have pace?—Yes.

10305. If a polo pony in these days cannot gallop like a racehorse he is not worth anything?—I told you that when you asked me first.

10306. If you get the Hackney in do you think the Hackney could breed anything that could gallop?—I don't think anything of the sort. It has not the ways of keeping back the girth of the saddle in the right place.

10307. Do you think it could breed a pony that could gallop?—It might.

10308. How—it would gallop all clambering in the air?—Yes.

10309. Then it could not gallop?—I told you so before.

10310. You say that you don't object to the Hackney blood getting into the country where you propose the polo pony should be bred. Do you consider that the formation of the Hackney is likely to get a galloping polo pony?—I told you twice, Colonel, that I did not like them.

10311. But you said you had no objection to their coming in?—No I have not, but I would not buy one of them. I would know them by their head, neck, and shoulders. If you go to cross-question me, Colonel, you will make me very cross. I told you I had an objection to them, and I say it still. You have no one else to examine, and you are asking me too many questions.

10312. Now, Meleady, answer me. Do you think that the Hackney horse would be conducive to the breeding of polo ponies?—I would not have them at all.

10313. I only want one answer—yes or no?—I would not have them at all.

10314. Mr. WRENCH.—Now, Mr. Meleady, I am not going to bother you much. I am just going to ask you two questions. When you say that the Hackney won't stay have you formed that opinion from your own experience or merely from what you hear?—I know it; I can prove it.

10315. From what Hackney?—Several that friends of my own had.

10316. You are sure they were bred from Hackneys?—Yes, sir. They might be bad Hackneys. They were lively for a while, but could not stay.

10317. But you cannot say that of all Hackneys?—I am only telling you, sir, what I know. You don't want me to swear to it.

10318. Were they Hackneys in Ireland?—I don't know whether they were or not, they were called Hackney horses. I was only told that.

10319. Do you think now it would pay a breeder in the West to sell his produce at five year old for £16 or £18, would it pay the small farmer?—It would pay them better if they got more, but when they could not get any more what could they do?

10320. Is that an industry that is worth going on with?—I don't think it is.

10321. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything further you wish to say?—Not a ha'p'orth more, sir. I will answer any question you ask me.

Veterinary-Lieutenant DRAGE, 10th Hussars, examined.

10322. CHAIRMAN.—You are Veterinary Surgeon to the 10th Hussars, now stationed at Newbridge?—Yes.

10323. You have had considerable experience in India, I think. To what extent does the Government carry on horse breeding there?—They get sires from home and Australia; I cannot say the number of sires they have there now. In the North Punjaub they had about 100; in the South Punjaub they had not so many, eighty, I suppose; in the North-west Provinces they had some, I don't know the number, and some in Bombay, and one or two in Central Provinces—thoroughbreds, Hackneys, Norfolk trotters, thoroughbred Australians, and Arabs. They were put out in the various districts of India under the superintendents of horse-breeding. I was in the North Punjaub. We travelled the districts, branding approved mares for horse breeding, and each stallion was allowed fifty mares. That is the extent to which it was going on when I left.

10324. Can you give us any idea as to the character of the different sort of horses, that is Australians, Hackneys, and so on, which were the best adapted to suit the country?—In my mind, undoubtedly the strong thoroughbred English horse or the strong Australian horse are infinitely better adapted to the mares of the country than the Hackney.

10325. What sort of mares are they?—They vary all over India. In Beloochistan the mares were quite as good as the mares you will see in England or Ireland. The mares in the Pindi district were very good indeed, but as you get further south, they were weedy mares, mares without any conformation about them. But you get fewer misfits, I think, with the thoroughbred than with the Hackney, and then as the produce grew up they were certainly better for military purposes, the better-bred ones, that is the thoroughbred ones, than the Hackneys. For instance, after leaving the horse breeding department I was in a regiment mounted on country breds, and the better bred horses at field days were very easily distinguished. Fewer came to the sick lines, fewer were lame, you got fewer bone diseases, such as splints, side-bone, ringbones, and spavins, with the better bred horses.

10326. That is with the thoroughbred and Australian?—Yes, and the Arab. The only fault I could find with the Arab stock was that they did not grow large enough. The best Arabs never ran, I think, over 14.2, or something like that, the Arab sires, and they did not get the stock quite large enough to carry the weights.

10327. Then did they put these horses out in the different districts with an eye to the mares of the districts so as to correct any faults there might be in the mares?—We had to do that, but they varied in themselves, even. We were told to put the Hackneys where the small mares were. We indented for many more thoroughbreds than we got. Annually we had to send an indent to England to Sir John Watson to purchase, but he could never buy a sufficient number of thoroughbreds, and he made up the deficiency with Hackneys, so we had to utilise them, and put them somewhere, and we put them in those districts where the smaller mares were.

10328. We should like to hear your experience of the

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produce of the Hackneys?—I don't think the produce was nearly so good as the produce of the thoroughbred. Each district has its own show, or the majority of the districts annual horse shows; and there the thoroughbred always came out, taking the prize. The better class of animal was by a thoroughbred, the prize-winner as a rule.

10329. In the conformation of the produce could you see any difference?—The produce of the Hackney had the Hackney characteristics—more of the crested neck, not such fine shoulders as the thoroughbred. The quality and the substance was not so good, was not so hard. More action, far more action than the thoroughbred.

10330. You think that the Hackney stallion passed down the action to the produce?—Undoubtedly, to a certain extent; but we found the strong thoroughbred horse the best horse for the country-bred mares. Failing these the Walers were, I think, nearly as good as the English thoroughbred, and then the Arabs; but the price the Indian Government gave for the stallion from home was £200, and I don't think that was sufficient; but the system they adopted was to encourage the native farmer to keep his brood mare. That was the chief thing we had to do—not to sell the mare, but to keep her for breeding purposes.

10331. What scheme was there in India to encourage the farmer to keep his mare?—At these shows each district has its own horse show, and the majority of the money was given to this class—the brood mares with foal at foot, brood mares in foal to stallions.

10332. That is, in foal to the Government stallions?—Yes; but in those districts every mare that was put to a thoroughbred stallion was branded "V.I." on the shoulder. These were the only animals, and the produce of these mares the only animals allowed to be shown at the show, and to keep those mares more money was given in prizes in those classes. For instance, more money was given in the brood mare class than in the yearlings or two-year-olds.

10333. What did that represent in English money for each prize in the class?—It varied so in the different districts; some were richer than others and gave more money; in some they would give as much as £20—and in India that would represent a lot to the natives—to the zemindar—and then private individuals would give prizes. They would leave it to us, the superintendents of horse-breeding, to arrange how it should go—for silver medals and things—and we always gave those in the brood mare class.

10334. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Tell Lord Rathdonnel on what principle it was carried out—the whole thing was by civil aid under civilians?—Each district had its own money allotted to it by the Government to spend in various works and things in the district. A certain portion of that money was given for horse-breeding in the district. It varied according to the district, whether it was a rich district or a poor district. The Rawul Pindi district was a rich district, and the prizes were very big, indeed; and also there they had many private individuals who were interested in horse-breeding, and they themselves would give large prizes and silver medals to the farmers—and out there a medal is thought a lot of by a farmer; and all those private prizes were always given in the brood mare class. That was the way we encouraged them to keep their brood mares. We would never give an extra prize in the gelding class or anything. They might be sold; in fact, the sooner they were sold the better, and the bigger prizes they got the more it encouraged the people to breed.

10335. CHAIRMAN.—How were those shows managed; under what superintendence?—Under the Deputy Commissioner of the District and the Superintendent of the Horse-breeding Department. I don't think there is anything in Ireland or England that would represent it.

Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I understood that the Government of India were the proprietors of a number of stallions?—Yes.

10336. How did the private owners of stallions like having Government horses put down in districts—I suppose there were private owners who owned stallions there too?—Yes, wretched animals.

10337. Did they show any resentment?—Yes, they did not like it; the man who keeps a private stallion is thought a lot of amongst his own farmers—the people who rent land under him—he used to keep a squealy sort of unsound animal, and the Government stallion prevented mares going to him.

10338. As a matter of fact was the effect of putting these Government stallions in the district to drive a number of these unsound or inferior animals out of the district?—Oh, undoubtedly.

10339. They disappeared?—Yes, they were very few; I don't think I had more than ten in the North Punjaub.

10340. Ten, the property of private individuals?—Yes.

10341. But there were, I suppose, considerably more before the Government horses were put down?—Oh, yes, sufficient to get all the horses of India.

10342. When these Government horses were placed in these districts was any compensation given to private owners of stallions?—None at all—none whatever. What was recommended several times was to put a tax on the private stallions; it was suggested two or three times to encourage the farmer to keep an approved brood mare by letting him off so much land tax.

10343. Did the owners of mares pay any fees at all to the Government stallions?—None whatever, approved mares; anyone was allowed to put a mare that was not branded to a horse on payment of 40 rupees, but no one ever did, one or two a year, they all got their mares branded.

10344. And they were covered free?—They were covered free.

10345. And the military authorities or the Government had no claim upon the produce?—None whatever.

10346. The farmer could sell the produce to whoever he liked?—Yes; except in India it is peculiarly situated, the buyer always happens to be a Government official, the remount department or the Bengal native cavalry; but they could sell their produce to whoever they liked.

10347. You have had considerable opportunities of looking at Irish horses and Irish mares—do you consider that it would be possible to draw any analogy between the ordinary Irish bred mare and the country bred mare of India?—Well, I think the country bred mare of Beloochistan is a mare quite as good as an Irish mare; at the Horse Show, at a place called Dera Ghazi Khan, the brood mare class there was a splendid class—I think 300 brood mares—and there was hardly a bad one in the class.

10348. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Did not run quite as high, a little lower, but very much the same class?—Yes, a little lower, well-bred mares of substance and carrying weight.

10349. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You said one of the principal objects at these local shows was to encourage farmers to keep their mares?—Yes.

10350. Was there any special demand for mares in India, was there any market, any reason to believe the farmers would sell their mares?—Yes, there is a market in India for them—Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras; in all those places you can sell them. The Lahore dealers would buy them to send to those places—they are the biggest dealers in the world.

10351. Is a mare as a matter of fact up there more valuable than a gelding?—In certain parts of India they are; in Beloochistan they are; money would not buy them, they would not sell them there.

10352. Then you don't require to give them prizes to induce them to keep them?—Not in that part; they prefer a mare to a stallion.

10353. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Would you just let me interpose? Could you of late years find such a

thing as a four year old colt up in the North-West provinces in the fairs, because when I left there was hardly such a thing to be found. They were all taken down to the South of India at one and a half years old and filtered away into the native states?—Yes, you could find them, but not a very good sort. The Bengal cavalry now buy their own. For a year or two the Remount took them up, and now they buy the four year old geldings, and I am sorry to say many mares as well. Branding was chiefly for the purpose of preventing the Bengal cavalry buying mares. That was the only restriction on the sale, that Government officials were not allowed to buy B I mares. Directly I put a brand on a mare the owner could not sell that mare to a Government official.

10354. Mr. La Touche.—Since you have been in Ireland you have bought a certain number of horses in the country?—Yes.

10355. And you have visited many of the local shows and the Dublin show, and have had some experience I believe of seeing the way in which horses are bred in Ireland. Could you make any suggestion as to the way in which—perhaps I ought to say that a scheme has been submitted to us by a general officer, and other witnesses have suggested similar things, that mares should be taken from the cavalry regiments and artillery regiments and distributed among the farmers for breeding purposes in Ireland?

Colonel St. Quintin.—Cast mares?

Mr. La Touche.—No, selected mares.

Witness.—They must be over age, over fifteen years.

10356. Mr. La Touche.—No, I beg your pardon. The scheme I alluded to was suggested by a general officer and submitted to this Commission, that the mares were to be between six and ten years old, selected mares from regiments not in the First Army Corps. Do you think that that would be calculated to improve the breed of horses in this country?—These mares were to be given to the farmers, are they bound to keep them?

10357. They are not allowed to sell them?—Suppose they could not keep them properly.

10358. Well, that is a detail, they would be under a certain inspection from, I suppose, Government officials, and the idea is that they pay from 30*s.* to £2 a piece for the use of the mares, the produce to be the property of the tenant and be disposed of at his will?—I don't think if the mare was over ten she would be any use as a brood mare after that time. It is very sketchy whether they would hold or not.

10359. Do you think such a suggestion as that in the first instance would possibly meet with the approval of the colonels of cavalry regiments?—It certainly would not, after they have trained their mares and everything to have them taken away to be given to the farmers.

10360. At the same time if it could be carried into execution it would certainly place a number of useful mares at the disposal of the farmers?—Oh, I think it would, but I think the disadvantage to the regiment would be great.

10361. What do you think of the brood mares of Ireland from what you have seen of them?—I think they are useful mares. I think the great thing is to get sound stallions to mate them with, and I think more might be done to encourage farmers, something the same way as they did in India to keep the brood mares. The prizes now in the brood mare class are absurdly small, £10 and that sort of thing. The prizes ought to be £50 or something like that. You will get bigger prizes than that in England at some of the shows.

10362. Do you think, on the whole, supposing there was a sum of money at the disposal of persons interested in horse-breeding in Ireland, do you think it would be better that a large proportion of that sum of money should be devoted to the purpose of the stallion or the mare?—I think it is most essential that you should have a sound stallion to begin with.

10363. And given a sound stallion, you would spend the money on the mares?—Yes, I should spend the money certainly on the mares, and the stallions ought to be registered and ought to be sound. There is no encouragement to the farmers to keep a good mare.

10364. Mr. Wrench.—How long were you in India?—Six years.

10365. All that time were you engaged in this horse-breeding?—Three years.

10366. And part of that time in the North Punjaub?—Always in the Punjaub, for part of the time I had the whole of the Punjaub, and for part of the time I had the North Punjaub, it was found to be too big for one.

10367. During part of that time were you partly under Colonel Queripel and partly under Colonel Hallen?—Yes.

10368. When you speak of thoroughbred Australians, you mean thoroughbred horses bred in Australia?—Yes.

10369. They were practically of the same breed as our own thoroughbred?—I suppose so, if you trace their pedigree back.

10370. Does Sir John Watson buy for the Indian Government in England?—Yes.

10371. And is there a regular requisition sent to him each year, telling him what stallions to buy?—Yes.

10372. As a matter of fact, I think they don't take thoroughbred stallions for India over 15·2?—I had many over.

10373. But I mean for the last three years?—I could not say for the last two years; certainly the last year I sent in my indent I did not restrict them to 15·2; it was never mentioned.

10374. You don't know that at present they don't buy them over 15·2?—No; in fact I always, in my annual report, asked for big stallions, and the big stallions I had I know got better produce than the smaller ones.

10375. And you thought the Arab stock too small?—That was the only objection I had to them.

10376. Are not the Hackneys at present imported into India, chiefly Norfolk trotters?—There were some Norfolk trotters and some Hackneys; they came out in the descriptive roll as Hackneys or Norfolk trotters, and some as roadsters, and I could see very little difference in any of them.

10377. They were largely bought from Norfolk?—I could not say; they were all of the same stamp.

10378. Do you know what price they are paying for thoroughbreds—what the limit is at present?—I think it was £200.

10379. You don't know now that it goes up to 350 guineas?—No; I hope it does; it was not enough in those days. There was no limit for the Arab stallions.

10380. Do you know what the numbers were last year purchased of each breed, thoroughbred and Hackney?—I have no idea since I left the Department what they are doing.

10381. You don't know that Sir John Watson had been out there lately?—I had a letter saying he was out there lately inspecting the studs.

10382. Did you ever see any good native-bred stallions?—A very few; we were ordered to purchase them if we could; I purchased one or two in the three years.

10383. Did you see any special native breed that would be worth preserving or trying to improve?—I think the Beloochistan breed if we could get stallions there, but they won't keep stallions; they insist on having them castrated.

10384. Are there not stallions of the same class as these mares?—The Belooch stallions are of the same breed as the mares.

10385. It has never been tried breeding them pure with stallions of their own breed?—They did it themselves before the Government interfered.

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10386. And have the Government by interfering improved the breed?—I think they have; the majority of this enormous brood mare class were by English sires.

10387. They were not by the original Belooch?—No.

10388. But no attempt has been made, except by supplying an exceptionally good stallion, to keep the breed?—No, in no part of India.

10389. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said that you saw as many as 300 mares with their produce at one of the shows in India?—Yes.

10390. How far have the farmers to bring in their mares and foals?—Many miles, I could not say how many; all over the district, and the district is an enormous area.

10391. They travel an immense distance?—An immense distance; the same as if they brought mares from all over Ireland to Dublin.

10392. It was the prizes that were given that induced them to bring the mares in to the show?—The prizes, and you see they bring their young stock in to sell to the remount department, or to the Bengal cavalry, or to private buyers.

10393. And you select their mares, too, I suppose, for next year?—I brand on that occasion two or three hundred young mares; it was like an immense fair or horse show—it was in India like the Dublin Horse Show.

10394. I take it that your method for improving the breed of horses would be to use a big, sound thoroughbred stallion, and to encourage farmers to keep their sound brood mares by subsidising them?—That is so.

10395. That is what you recommend?—Yes, to work in Ireland.

10396. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—And a very substantial subsidy?—Yes, I think the present is absolutely useless; the little paltry prizes they give now I would sooner give it in increased money for remounts, I think you want to give more money for brood mares.

10397. CHAIRMAN.—Have you anything else you would like to say?—Here in hunting districts you want the big thoroughbred stallion; in Connemara, and those places, you want the very small thoroughbred stallion to mate with the mares; I am not speaking from experience, but I should imagine that would be so.

10398. Well, you would stick to the thoroughbred?—I would stick to the thoroughbred for the polo pony. In India in the districts, not through the Government but privately by each district, they buy Arab ponies from the Bombay market, and place them all over the district to improve the breed of ponies in India.

10399. Where do these Arabs come from?—From Bombay market; from Arabia thousands are imported yearly.

10400. Where do they import them from?—From Arabia; it is quite a sight in Bombay, the Arab market.

10401. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I should like to ask you one question touching on the trooper question, don't you consider that for the trooper it is absolutely necessary you should have quality and staying power, and light even action?—I think it is absolutely necessary; I think it is essential for a troop horse to be well bred to be a good one.

10402. And he wants light even action, not extravagant?—I think so, that was what I always found with the 5th Lancers in India; some had the Norfolk trotter, and some the thoroughbred, and the thoroughbreds always wore down the half-breds.

10403. You would advocate nothing but the thoroughbred?—For troopers, certainly.

The Commissioners adjourned.

March 3, 1897.

TWENTIETH DAY—WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3RD, 1897.

Sitting at 12, Hanover Square, W., London.

Present:—THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; THE RIGHT HON. LORD ASHTOWN; THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, K.G.; Mr. J. L. CAREW, M.P.; RIGHT HON. LORD RATHDONNELL; HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM; COLONEL ST. QUINTIN; Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE; Mr. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

The Lord Tredegar

The LORD TREDEGAR examined.

10404. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Monmouthshire, do you not?—Yes.

10405. And you have been for a long time interested in the subject of horse-breeding?—Yes, I have.

10406. Could you tell us what classes of horses you breed, and what classes of stallions you keep?—I keep three classes, thoroughbreds, Shire horses, and Hackneys.

10407. Would you tell the Commission your experience in breeding from these three classes of stallions?—Do you mean experience of breeding generally as a heart-breaking sort of operation, do you mean that?

10408. I rather wanted to know the results?—I suppose I am here merely with a brief for the Hackney people because I am on the Council of the Hackney Society, and have been now for three years, and therefore I have taken a great interest in the Hackneys, more particularly.

10409. How many Hackney stallions do you keep?—Two.

10410. What class of mares do you put them to?—Almost anything that comes to them. All of my tenants have the use of them, and all the farmers over whose lands my hounds hunt, so they have as much as they can do. I find a Hackney is a very useful animal that way.

10411. Lord LONDONDERRY.—What kind of a mare do they send, as a rule, to them?—Small mares, 15 hands, used for light plough work and light trap work into the markets.

10412. Do you keep good Hackney mares yourself?—I have only one. I don't keep any mares really to breed from them; I have so much to do with the tenants who send their mares to the farm I have no room really for it, and I do not consider my country suitable for a stud of that description. I don't think it is suitable for breeding horses in any large way. The soil is not good for it.

10413. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know the congested districts in Ireland at all?—No, I don't at all.

don't know that I ever was there, it is a long time ago since I was in Ireland. I don't think I was ever in what may be called a congested district, but I imagine they are rather similar to our mountain districts in Wales.

10414. I dare say you have heard that the ordinary class of mares in the congested districts is a very small and rather inferior animal?—Yes, I have heard that.

10415. Would you think that the Hackney stallion would be the best class of stallion to be put to such a mare in order to breed a useful animal?—I should say so decidedly, looking at my own district, a great part of it in Brecknockshire, where I own mountain lands, where the ponies are reared on the mountains, Welsh ponies. I think the strain likely to improve them is as a rule good Hackneys, pure-bred Hackney stallion.

10416. Do you think the Hackney crosses well with the Welsh pony?—I think so. I am very strongly impressed that way myself. Some five or six years ago a large district came into my possession, about 15,000 acres of moor, disafforested land in Brecknockshire, which adjoins my manor, where Welsh ponies grow, and I did intend to have gone in largely for improving the breed by buying four or five of the very best Hackney stallions I could, and putting them there. It so happened that some dispute arose and I gave it up. But I was so impressed with the idea of how useful it would be to import Hackney stallions into pony rearing countries that I was fully intending to have gone in for it there.

10417. Could you tell us at all about the produce of the Hackney sire and the Welsh pony?—It breeds the sort of animal so marketable now for ladies driving in Ralli-carts, victorias and broughams, small steppers. I had a Norfolk stallion called "Young Gulliver," five or six years ago, an extraordinary fine goer, with hind action, and all round me all the farmers have little stepping horses by him that they drive to market now, and which they can sell quite easily to dealers.

10419. What age can they sell them at?—About three years old, as soon as they can; too soon indeed a great deal, they want to make money as soon as they can nowadays, as I daresay you know.

10419. What do they get for them?—£40 or £50 for three-year-olds, they can sell them if they step at all.

19420. Do you know where they go to?—Mostly to London and the other big towns.

10421. Do they sell direct to dealers?—Direct to dealers, I think; they clear them off so soon that very often I don't see them.

10422. Do they sell them in fairs, or do the dealers come round?—I think the dealers come round. I think it would be absolutely useless to send a thoroughbred stallion into that part of Brecon I first alluded to, the thoroughbred stallion would be absolutely useless unless he was very small, and a very small thoroughbred stallion is a sort of thing you can only pick up by chance.

10423. You would prefer the Hackney sire to the thoroughbred sire at equal prices?—Certainly; but there are districts like Carnarvonshire, Pembrokeshire, and Cardiganshire, where they breed big boned hunters. I should never think of sending a Hackney stallion into that district, they have got really good thoroughbred horses there, and breed very good hunters. I imagine I am here to say what I think would be useful for the congested districts of Ireland.

10424. Our inquiry is not confined to the congested districts, we are dealing with the whole of Ireland. I should gather from what you have said that you would consider a suitable thoroughbred sire would be the best sire in the country capable of breeding high-class hunters?—Yes, for countries which are in the habit of breeding hunters I should stick to the thoroughbred stallion.

10425. And from your experience of Wales, you should think that in the congested districts the Hackney sire would be the most suitable?—A good Hackney sire would certainly be the best, certainly for producing animals that would enable the farmers to sell readily; I don't see what you can do with the thoroughbred horse and a small pony, except to get racing ponies, which of course are marketable to a certain extent, if they can race like a racehorse, but where you breed one that can race you breed forty that cannot.

10426. Have you any idea of how the Welsh pony was originally produced?—No, I cannot say, I think they have been there from time immemorial in the Welsh hills, they run wild and loose, not looked after as they ought to be, the stallions particularly.

10427. How about the Welsh cob?—It would be very difficult to define the Welsh cob. I gave a prize at my show for pony stallions, I never get more than one or two shown there, and those are certainly not animals I should care to use to improve the breed; that is more the reason why I am so fond of the Hackney stallions for improving it, for I think the breed itself is neglected, bred so in and in, by running loose on the mountains, that they want some fresh strain, and it should be a strain that has got not only knee action, but hind action and riding shoulders.

10428. The congested districts, as you know, extend all over the western seaboard of Ireland, from north to south, and assuming that the Hackney sire would be the most useful class of sire in that part of the country, and assuming, broadly, that the greater part of the rest of the country is adapted for producing hunters, would you, from your experience, think that there would be any danger to the rest of the country from introducing Hackney blood into the congested districts?—I should think not, certainly not, if you mean that the breed would get spread about it; it would be a better breed than is there now.

10429. You think if the Hackney strain permeated through the districts devoted to breeding high-class hunters it would do no harm?—No, I think not, it would do good, you would have better mares from them spread about the country than you have now.

10430. Have your local shows been beneficial, do you think?—Tredegar Show was originally started as a fat stock show, or fat cattle show, it had very little to do with horses until lately. I give prizes for colts, sired by one of my horses, it is held at a very bad time of the year, just before Christmas, farmers don't show very many, I don't look upon it as much use in the horse-breeding line, it is more for cattle.

10431. Do you do anything to try and induce farmers to breed from their best mares?—Of course, I reserve the right of refusing any mares that come to my stallion, that is all.

10432. I mean in the show, in the way of prizes?—There are prizes for brood mares; but I find the same animal generally wins every year. There are not many shown—two or three. The farmers have such an objection to showing, they always say, "there is some rich man or big farmer that is sure to take it." That is my experience of local shows.

10433. Lord LONDONDERRY.—But you yourself keep these stallions at Tredegar?—Yes.

10434. That is where you hunt?—Yes.

10435. Do the farmers in the country hunt as a rule?—No, not many of them. Very few farmers hunt.

10436. They don't breed hunting mares—they have not hunting mares of their own?—No; except just now they have a few of them since I got these stallions.

10437. Are they a large class of farmer?—No, small. Most of them work on the farm.

10438. And they have these ponies you have been speaking of?—Yes; a sort of light cart mare. They prefer the Hackney a great deal to the thoroughbred.

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10439. Mares of 15 hands?—Yes.

10440. Well-bred mares?—No, not well-bred, because they are used as leaders in the plough in the hilly parts.

10441. What do you suppose they have been got by originally—by anything they can get. Have they taken any care in breeding them?—No; they are got by any stallion that came around.

10442. Do they send those to the Hackney?—Yes, for choice. They have twice the work the thoroughbred has.

10443. And the result you say, the produce of these mares, is sent up to the London dealers?—Yes, that is where they go.

10444. Have you ever seen the result of these mares by your Hackneys crossed with a thoroughbred stallion?—No, I don't know that I have noticed it. I have in my own hunting stables now two of my best servants' horses which are by one of my Hackneys.

10445. Out of what kind of mare?—Out of the very commonest mares—one that came to the kennel.

10446. Of course, you know that in Ireland the great fear of the hunter-breeding people is that the result of these Hackneys will get out of the districts in which these Hackneys are found, and will be the means of ruining hunters in the hunter-breeding parts of Ireland. From your knowledge of the Hackneys and hunters do you think they are justified in entertaining these fears?—That is not to be feared I think myself; but I cannot tell about a particular district. I fancy the complaint in Ireland is you have got so few good mares.

10447. Do you limit your horse at all to the number of mares, or does he cover as many as are sent?—I should be obliged to limit them, otherwise there would be too many. I don't limit them until my man says he cannot do any more. We have another stallion now.

10448. In fact, they are extremely popular in that district?—Yes. The thoroughbred has hardly enough to do, and the Hackneys have more than they can do.

10449. In fact, they don't really take advantage of the thoroughbred stallion because they have not got mares of the proper class to send to them?—Yes; they breed a light, leggy, weedy thing that does not sell at all. A 12-stone hunter is worth about 30 sovereigns as a four-year-old.

10450. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—What, as a rule, are the mares about you?—Oh, mostly about 15 hands, light trappers. I believe originally from a Welsh pony.

10451. And there is no great amount of hunter-breeding there?—No.

10452. You say you think that if you introduced a Hackney stallion the blood would not permeate the adjoining county where there was hunter-breeding?—No, I don't think so. I don't think it would do any great harm if it did. The really good Hackney is a beautiful strain. He goes back to the Derby Arabian and "The Shales" and "Prick-willow," very old strain.

10453. Lord Rathdonnell.—Have you ever seen any of the ponies that come from the west of Ireland?—No, I don't know that I have, I don't know the breed at all.

10454. You don't know how they compare at all?—I do not.

10455. Mr. La Touche.—You have bought Irish hunters I suppose, Lord Tredegar?—Yes, I suppose so, what are called Irish hunters.

10456. I suppose you acknowledge, like most people, that the Irish hunter is a very excellent animal?—Oh, yes.

10457. But you don't think that the excellence is due to the fact of its having no Hackney blood in its pedigree, nothing but thoroughbred blood?—Oh, I should think that probably it was.

10458. But at the same time you don't think that a mixture of Hackney blood would have a prejudicial effect upon the horse?—Well, that is rather a difficult question to answer, I think.

10459. Some people in Ireland maintain that the excellence of the Irish hunter, his superiority to the ordinary hunter as bred in England, is greatly due to the fact of his dam and grand-dam being descended from thoroughbred horses from time immemorial, and they consequently look with grave suspicion on any fresh blood being mingled with the pedigrees of Irish horses?—Well, I have just said that two of my best hunters are by a Hackney stallion, and that being the first cross I don't see why it should hurt, if you went on breeding; supposing those had been mares, I don't think you would have a worse style of horse from them, they happened to be geldings otherwise I would have bred from them.

10460. I am afraid that in breeding horses, like any other animal, where the first cross might turn out fairly well, in the second and third crosses you got out all the bad points and lose all the good ones of the original strains?—Yes, I know that is very often said, but I never found it myself either in hounds or horses. It was said that a first cross between a Welsh and English hound was first-rate, but if you cross it again it was bad, but I never found it myself.

10461. I don't say in hounds, but in dogs if you cross a pointer and setter you will get a very useful animal, but if you breed from that again they tell me the produce is useless?—You probably breed a non-descript, I don't see why it should be useless unless it is a known fact that it is.

10462. Do your Hackney stallions cover at the same fees as the thoroughbred sires?—Yes, they have all covered for nothing, I may say.

10463. Lord Ashtown.—Do you find the Hackney when he is crossed with the pony increases the size, the cross?—Oh, yes, most certainly.

10464. Does it make any other noticeable difference?—Of course a Hackney is bigger than a pony to start with.

10465. You can get a small Hackney, but a big one do you find it gives substance?—Oh, yes, that is one of the principal advantages they have, such splendid forelegs and feet; of course the sire must be a good Hackney, a bad Hackney is about as bad a thing as you can have.

10466. You say you have two horses in your own stable by your own Hackney stallion?—Yes.

10467. Are they good serviceable horses?—Most serviceable, hard and splendid fencers, they have got just the hind action that the sire had, and they can jump ten or twelve feet out of a trot just as easy as most horses can do out of a gallop.

10468. Do a day's work and stay?—Yes, and all day too, and don't look like doing it, they don't look like being great powerful horses.

10469. Mr. Carew.—What is the average extent of the holdings in your district?—About 80 acres to 100 acres.

10470. Then they are pretty well off?—They don't say so.

10471. Do they use the produce of this Hackney cross for farming purposes—for drawing purposes?—Oh, yes, and for light chain work and light trap work into market.

10472. And they are sold about three years old to the London market?—Yes.

10473. You don't think they are suitable then for heavy farm work such as ploughing and cart?—No, I don't think so.

10474. Mr. Wrench.—When you talk of eighty-acre holdings, about what rent per acre are they, what class of land, is it very poor?—No, it is rather good grass land, but it is mostly a clay soil, and it is not suitable for breeding horses.

10475. Have they mountain run with the agricultural land, any rough land with it?—The mountain farmers have fields on the level to put their stock on in winter

10476. Then they don't winter them on the hills?—Oh, no, they all come down from the hills.

10477. But they leave the young stock out all the winter?—Yes, entirely.

10478. And do you find the produce of these Hackneys are very hardy?—Yes, I think so; constitutionally hardy you mean?

10479. Yes?—Yes, I think so, just as hardy as any other.

10480. Have you been able to see if there is any difference between the produce of the thoroughbred and the produce of the Hackney in the way of hardiness?—Oh, yes, certainly, the produce of the thoroughbred cannot stand out in the winter like the produce of the Hackney.

10481. Then in those cases where the horses would be liable to great hardships do you think a Hackney would be the best cross?—Oh, yes, certainly.

10482. I think Mr. La Touche asked you if you thought the excellence of Irish hunters was due to the fact that nothing but thoroughbred blood was in their pedigrees. Do you know, as a matter of fact, that one-third of the stallions in Ireland are draught-horses or half-bred draught-horses?—No, I don't know that.

10483. You don't know that for a great many years cart-horses have been introduced into Ireland and been all over the hunting districts?—No, I don't know anything about Ireland that way.

10484. Have you bred many hunters yourself from thoroughbred horses?—Yes, a good many, but not with much success. I have never been very particular in the mares; I have used mares that were broken down or favourite mares.

10485. Is it your experience that a misfit hunter makes a good harness horse, a horse not good enough for a hunter?—It depends upon what you call a good harness horse.

10486. Does he make a saleable harness horse?—A useful slave, but not a valuable harness horse.

10487. Do you think action is a great thing?—Yes, everything in a harness horse.

10488. Do you think action is one of the most valuable things that a small farmer can try for?—I think so.

10489. You think a horse with action will sell much better than any other horse?—I think so undoubtedly.

10490. How many years have you had these Hackney stallions in Wales?—Fourteen or fifteen years now.

10491. Did the farmers use them much at first?—No, I don't think they did.

10492. What has made them so popular now?—Because they found that they can sell their produce I think. When a horse gets a name you will find a sale for the animals by that horse.

10493. Do you think it would pay them at all as well to try and breed polo ponies?—No, I don't think so. I don't think my country is suitable for that.

10494. But I suppose there are the mares, are there not?—No, not suitable for breeding polo ponies.

10495. There have been very good polo ponies bred from Welsh ponies, have there not?—Well, I am talking about my own district near me; there are no mountain ponies bred near me at all, that is some way off.

10496. They are rather a larger size, but still the mountain pony blood comes into it a good deal?—I suppose it does down there.

10497. We have heard a great deal about the soft blood in Hackneys, can you tell us where the soft blood in Hackneys comes in?—No, I don't know at all about that.

10498. Is it your experience that Hackneys are soft or not?—No, certainly not. I buy nearly all my carriage horses, driving horses and team horses from Norfolk, and I find they can trot on as long as any other horse.

10499. And do a good journey?—Oh yes. There are of course awful bad brutes of Norfolk Hackneys.

10500. I suppose you have seen a great many thoroughbred horses?—Yes.

10501. Do you think there are as many bad horses in proportion among thoroughbreds as there are among Hackneys?—I should say more.

10502. Have you been able to form an opinion as to their soundness, whether the Hackney is a sound horse or not?—I think they are very sound. I should say as sound as any breed, racehorses or cart-horses.

10503. And their produce generally sound?—Generally sound. I think they have very good feet and limbs, which so many other breeds don't have.

10504. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any preference for any particular locality as regards Hackneys, Norfolk or Yorkshire?—Yorkshire I prefer to the Norfolk. I think they are more riding horses, the Norfolk are more driving.

10505. Yours come from Yorkshire do they?—No, I have one now from Yorkshire. The ones I had before were from Norfolk, but I think they are more riding-looking horses in Yorkshire than in Norfolk.

10506. And how many generations of the produce of the Hackney stallions have you had experience of, you have kept Hackney stallions a great number of years?—About fourteen or fifteen years, it has been going on now for that time.

10507. And putting the progeny of the Hackney to the Hackney again, I suppose?—Yes, I think so. Do you mean putting a mare by a Hackney to the same Hackney again or to a Hackney.

10508. To a Hackney?—Oh, yes, I think so, and with a good Hackney they go on getting just the same.

10509. I think you said you considered that the Hackney was a hardier animal than the thoroughbred and could stand more vicissitudes of climate?—Yes, stand more climate, more bad weather, out-of-doors, I don't think a thoroughbred can stand any; you cannot leave a thoroughbred out in the fields all through the winter, he would fall away to nothing, and die probably.

10510. But the cross between a thoroughbred and a half-bred mare for instance in Ireland. I am not talking of the stallion, either Hackney or thoroughbred stallion, but the produce?—Oh, I should think he would be softer than the produce of the Hackney because the Hackney comes from a hardier strain, a coarser strain like the cart-horse.

10511. Can you say that from practical experience, your own experience?—Yes, I think so, I have seen things on my own farm, that I have left out, falling away, while your cart-horse and Hackneys were doing well.

10512. Is there any other information you can give us or anything you would like to say?—No, I don't think so.

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Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS, M.P., examined.

10513. CHAIRMAN.—You have had a large experience in breeding horses, have you not?—Very.

10514. Particularly from Hackneys?—Particularly from Hackneys. If you will permit me I will explain just for a moment why I supplied the Commission with the scheme of evidence which is before them. From this large experience I assumed that I would understand and know many of the points which were pertinent to the inquiry, and it seemed to me as my experience was so extensive that it might possibly be for the convenience of the Commission if I classified the points on which I felt qualified to speak with the

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sole idea of saving time, and keeping the matter clear.

10515. I think it would be convenient if you give us your information according to the order of subjects which you put down in this document. You were consulted, were you not, by the Congested Districts Board as to what class of stallion would be suitable to the congested districts?—I was. I have the letter in which I was consulted, and my reply is here. I don't know whether you would care to hear it. My only reason for submitting it is that the letter which I wrote before my tour of inspection might just as well have been written after it.

10516. CHAIRMAN.—We have had your reply?—Yes.

Mr. LA TOUCHE.—We have not had the letter Mr. Burdett-Coutts replied to.

10517. CHAIRMAN.—I am not sure; I think we have.

Mr. NEVILLE (Secretary.)—No; we have not got it.

Witness,—It was the first communication I ever received on the subject from Mr. Wrench. It ran:—

"21st December, 1891.

"DEAR SIR.—The Congested Districts Board for Ireland are about to make the experiment of locating stallions in a few stations in the congested districts for the purpose of improving the breed of ponies. They propose to limit the price which they will give for the stallions to £150, and would be glad if they could purchase under that price. May I venture to ask you where it is possible to obtain stallions from 14.2 to 15 hands high, best calculated to produce cobs and ponies. The stallions must have good shapes, notably good shoulders, and good action. Perhaps you will kindly at the same time say whether you think the objects of the Board will best be attained by purchasing Arabs, small thoroughbreds, or small Hackneys? There is no doubt but that the latter would be the most popular in the districts, if they could be had. I trust you will kindly excuse the liberty I have taken in writing to you, but feel sure that the scheme of the Board is one in which you will take an interest.

"Believe me, truly yours,

"FREDERICK WRENCH."

10518. Perhaps you better read your reply?—I will read pertinent points of my reply which you will find in full in the printed document. "It is a little difficult for me to advise you definitely without being acquainted with the exact type of ponies from which it is desired to breed, and without knowing what class of animals will find the best market in the special districts. Assuming, however, on these two points—(1.) That the matrix will consist of undersized stock, short of both quality and action, and in addition weedy and light of bone; and (2.) That it is desired to raise the standard of excellence, that while the stock produced will be more serviceable for the common purposes which are at present to be served, breeders will also have an opportunity of getting here and there a horse with fine action and shape which would fetch good prices from the harness dealer, and so gradually draw a better class of dealers into the districts.—I have no hesitation in strongly advising the use of the Hackney stallion. I do not believe in the Arab; nor do I think the result just mentioned would be in any way advanced by the use of a small thoroughbred. The thoroughbred is not the horse to get harness stock, because in 99 cases out of 100, his produce is deficient in action, which now raises the price of the harness horse all over the world; and further, because his tendency is to get them high on the leg and light of bone. The Hackney corrects the latter deficiencies, gives width, strength, weight-carrying and draught power; and in addition gives action. It goes without saying that you must get the right sort of Hackney, because there are a great many of the wrong sort. There are very many important considerations in choosing a Hackney, such as back-blood, reliability for endurance, etc., which must be added to those you mention of action and shapes."

10519. You subsequently made a report?—Yes; three months afterwards I made a tour, of which the following is a programme:—Oughterard, Cashel, Clifden, Maum, Clonbur, Lenane, Westport, Newport, Mulranny, Achill Sound, Ballycroy, Bangor Erris; Belmullet, Crossmolina, Ballina, Foxford, and Swinford. At each place the neighbouring farmers brought their mares in and I carefully examined them. I should rather like to read this because I revised the advice which I gave about the Arab and the small thoroughbred for a particular reason which was disclosed during the tour. Here is an extract from my report on the tour:—

"I proceed briefly to explain the principles which have guided me in the opinions I have placed before the Board. It would, I think, have been unwise to attempt to make any violent change in the kind of horse produced in these wild districts, where there exists a common type of pony or little horse, greatly deteriorated in some respects, but still possessed of many valuable points which can be handed on, in conjunction with new and improved features to be acquired by the use of a superior class of stallion. To attempt to produce heavy cart or draught horses from these ponies, whose small size is fixed by long heredity, or (by the use of the ordinary thoroughbred sire) to look for a supply of the high priced hunters for which other parts of Ireland are justly famed, would be at once foolish and hopeless. Such an attempt would result in the loss of most of all the valuable features of the existing breed, while none of the attributes aimed at would be secured. Moreover neither the land, nor the means of the farmer, nor the conditions under which horses are at present reared, would support big horses. The object aimed at therefore has been to improve the existing type by the introduction of quality, substance, and action; that while the horses produced will be as good, if not better, for the work they have to do in the country, they will also include many specimens which will bring to the breeders a higher price than that at present obtained. In addition to good-looking cobs and ponies for harness and saddle, the production of the special article known as the polo pony will in certain districts and by providing suitable stallions be encouraged. In my opinion there is no reason why Connemara and Mayo should not in a few years time become the recognised breeding ground of the best cobs and polo ponies to be found in Ireland."

Well, I found in a portion of the district which I visited that there had been constantly a supply of polo ponies, but that that supply had ceased. I do not consider the Hackney stallion suitable for the production of polo ponies, and I therefore advised Arabs or very small thoroughbreds, or, what was much better in my opinion, actual getters of polo ponies however they were bred. I am given to understand that this was done, but that generally where such a stallion and a Hackney were both within reach the farmers preferred the Hackney. Of course I cannot speak of that for a certainty. I don't know if I may explain a little further my advice with regard to this. I found in these districts what I call a "fixed type," and it may be taken as an axiom in horse-breeding that wherever you have a fixed type you can predicate with tolerable accuracy the results of crossing that type with another fixed type. What I mean by a fixed type is a horse whose characteristics of shape, substance, action, quality, and so on, have come to him by virtue of heredity, have been repeated over and over again in his ancestors on both sides until they have become fixed; and by reason of his having obtained them by heredity he is prepotent *qua* those characteristics, and he is able to hand them on to his stock. I found certain deficiencies in that fixed type, since my harness department has grown in importance

and I believe that these deficiencies would be best supplied by the use of the Hackney stallion. The fixed type in the West is a small pony with good courage and stamina, and here and there some signs of quality but lamentably deficient in bone, action, shape, and substance. I should like to state a somewhat curious fact. These farmers who had never been out of the district and who appeared to know very little, when they were asked what sort of stallion they wanted—I think Mr. Wrench will remember this, I asked them over and over again—replied in varying terms giving a very emphatic description of the sort of stallion they wanted. They had never seen a Hackney, they had never heard of a Hackney, but their description tallied almost exactly with the Hackney type. I advised small Hackneys because I understood that small horses were wanted in the district for local work. When the latter part of my tour brought me to a district, which in the "scheme of evidence" I have called the "Borderland" between the pony districts and the interior, there was a pitiable *melange* of every description of bad horse, mostly produced from the aforesaid ponies by Suffolks, Clydesdales, and thoroughbreds. They were either shapeless lumps or undersized weeds about 15 hands high, with absolutely nothing to recommend them. The undersized weeds had been almost without exception the result of sending thoroughbred sires to the districts of the West which I had visited. There was obviously more hope from the extreme West with its poor but fixed type than from the outlying districts with their poor and promiscuous collection. I believe it would have resulted in permanent advantage to the country side if the whole of the latter had been carted off and tumbled into the sea. But the best I could do was to apply my second axiom which was that where you have a promiscuous type of horse produced by unsystematic breeding from every kind of sire. If you put a fixed type upon that promiscuous type, the fixed type having a prepotency with regard to its characteristics will improve the promiscuous type and to a certain extent conquer the promiscuous type. I advised the Hackney stallion again for this district, but in that case I advised a full-sized Hackney stallion. I think it will be obvious from the description I have given of the native stock in the districts I visited, that my advice to introduce Hackney stallions applied to material from which there was no possibility of producing a hunter. That is all I have to say about my tour.

10520. Before going to another subject perhaps it would be convenient for the Commissioners to ask you some questions upon these points. I should like to ask you one or two questions myself. The fixed type you speak of, I understand, to be the ponies?—Yes.

10521. That is, the aboriginal horse, or the aboriginal horse improved by means we don't know of?—By experience I should think the fixed type of pony had been very little crossed with anything that could improve it for a very long period back. Where I saw the cross which I constantly did of a thoroughbred horse upon the pony it was what I have described, namely, a 15 hands horse without any bone or any action. I cannot imagine to what purpose such a horse could be put.

10522. We have had it in evidence that the Connemara pony crossed with thoroughbred sires produces very valuable hunters?—That I could not say myself nor could I find it by exhaustive inquiry; I asked about it.

10523. In your opinion this fixed type has deteriorated?—I should think it had gradually deteriorated: I don't know what it has deteriorated from—that is rather a speculation, but from the treatment of the animal alone I should imagine it had deteriorated. They ride these animals at two years old sometimes; two people ride on their backs. Their hocks were the great defect.

10524. I understand you to say that you think the small Hackney sires put to this fixed type of ponies would be apt to produce polo ponies?—I beg your pardon, that is exactly what I did not say. I said my opinion was that the Hackney stallion was not a sire for the polo pony.

10525. A small thoroughbred sire or any sire that is known to get a polo pony?—I don't know what breed a polo pony sire belongs to, but you should have a sire that has proved himself a getter of polo ponies.

10526. There is much of a chance in breeding a polo pony?—I should think so.

10527. Have you seen the thoroughbred sires in these western districts that you are describing?—Yes, I think if I remember aright I saw three or four. I don't think we saw more. I did not like any of them. I don't remember what they were.

10527. I want to ask you whether in your opinion the class of thoroughbred sires in these poor districts are at all fair specimens of what a thoroughbred sire ought to be?—That I could not say.

10529. Do you know at all what kind of fees the farmers will pay for a thoroughbred sire in these congested districts?—I think they wanted to pay five shillings.

10530. Do you think that private enterprise would be likely to supply a thoroughly sound thoroughbred horse for a fee of five shillings?—As a private enterprise, oh! no.

10531. What I want to gather is whether you think the thoroughbred sire has, in these districts, had a fair chance of his being represented by a suitable description of thoroughbred sire?—That I am not able to say.

10532. And did many of the farmers describe to you the sort of horse they wanted?—Many of them over and over again.

10533. What kind of a description did they give?—They said they wanted horses with a lot of bone, with short legs, with substance and with action, particularly action; and at the same time they wanted nice necks on them.

10534. Do you think they were aiming at giving a description of what they thought to be a suitable thoroughbred sire?—I don't think that their description could possibly apply to the thoroughbred sire.

10535. They had never heard of or seen a Hackney, but they evolved the image of him out of their consciousness?—I think they evolved an image of the requirements which they thought would sell well.

10536. Then leaving the pony district you come to a district which is more or less infested with a very inferior promiscuous style of animal?—Very. I was very much surprised to find that the cart horse, the Clydesdale, the Suffolk, and the Shire horse had been used, and used I should imagine on the light native mares and on these ponies. I thought the result was deplorable, but I am not sure that it was quite so bad in my opinion for market purposes as the stock out of those ponies by thoroughbred stallions. Because, whereas I call the produce of the cart horse "lumps," a lump can draw, but the other nondescript 15-hands horse, with little bits of legs, no action, and shelly shapes. I myself could not say for what purpose he could be used or sold.

10537. And you think that there also the Hackney would have the best effect, but a larger class of stallion?—Yes; of course it is very difficult to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, but I think they would give better size and substance, and some uniformity of type.

10538. In both cases you would prefer, I gather, the Hackney to the thoroughbred, even assuming the thoroughbred was equally good of its kind to the Hackney?—Yes.

10539. Lord LONDONDERRY.—About this fixed type of ponies—you consider them a very poor class?—I cannot quite say that. There was something rather attractive in their quality, and also in the knowledge one had of the enormous amount of work they did.

10540. What do you suppose to be their worth?—Their worth in a market where a horse is necessarily

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sold from some consideration of his appearance would, I should say, be very low.

10541. Then I gather it is the result of these ponies crossed with thoroughbreds that you consider such a very poor stamp of creature?—Yes.

10542. Were you able to gather at all what kind of a thoroughbred horse it was that had covered these mares?—Lord Dunraven has already put that question to me; my view on that point was rather limited. I think we saw three or four thoroughbred stallions, I didn't like them.

10543. Were they animals broken down in training, or were they animals that you ever heard anything about?—No; I had not heard anything of those specific animals.

10544. They were owned by whom—by small people in the district?—I think they were owned—rather as a speculation, I fancy—by local proprietors. I don't want to go into any evidence beyond my own actual experience, although I may submit opinions. I think probably, if I may say so with all respect, that this might be got from other sources with greater accuracy than from me.

10545. Well, I was only asking you about the animals you said you thought had been a failure with the thoroughbred cross—have you any idea of what the thoroughbred was?—I think I would rather express my opinion about the stock which I saw than about the sire which I did not see. I only know the stock I am speaking of were by a thoroughbred.

10546. They are very hardy, I suppose?—The small ponies are very hardy; yes, the fixed type were very hardy.

10547. I suppose that really they would, as a rule, be crossed with any other pony that happened to be there?—As far as I could make out they were crossed with stallions of their own type. If a man bred a colt with a little more bone, perhaps, and a little more size, he would keep him as a stallion. I saw some of them. They were kept in hovels there—miserable looking animals, and certainly some of them were unsound. I could not imagine them being used as sires, or ever having produced even this fixed type of horse.

10548. They are a very small class of farmers up there that own these animals?—Very small and very poor.

10549. And I suppose would rather send their ponies to any sire they could get for nothing, or as cheaply as possible?—They would be willing to try it, most of them.

10550. Did they hold out any idea that if stallions of the stamp they described were sent, they would gladly send their ponies to them at a fee, or was it merely in their imagination?—I think the prospect of having stallions of the character that were afterwards put there was received with the greatest enthusiasm. It created a great deal of interest, and those people came in great distances from the mountains to us. I talked to them; some of them could hardly understand me.

10551. Lord Rathdonnell.—I think I understood you to say it would be foolish and useless to use a thoroughbred horse in the west of Ireland. I may have misunderstood you?—No; I don't think I said that. I described the horses I saw, I divided them into two classes; one a fixed type of pony, and the other a promiscuous, small, shapeless horse. I said I thought it would be useless and hopeless to attempt to breed profitable horses by the use of a thoroughbred sire upon that type.

10552. Upon which type?—Upon the promiscuous type.

10553. Was the promiscuous type in greater numbers than the fixed type?—Well, that I can't say because when my tour over the pony districts was completed that was all really I had to do, and when I went on to the "borderland" between the pony districts and the interior, I only covered a small amount of ground, and I only speak exactly of what I saw.

10554. Have you ever heard that ponies in the west of Ireland when crossed with a thoroughbred have frequently produced good hunters?—Shortly after my tour I had a letter which I have been trying to find, but cannot, from someone in the North of England, saying that he had had one of the best hunters he ever rode by a thoroughbred horse out of a West of Ireland pony; that is the only instance that I have ever heard. My inquiries in the district did not lead me to the same conclusion.

10555. Do you keep any thoroughbred stallions?—Not now; I have done so. I am not speaking of my stud at Newmarket. I have a thoroughbred stud at Newmarket.

10556. Have you sold any Hackney stallions to the Congested Districts?—Not one; I felt that having given the advice I did, my connection with the Board was closed.

10557. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—Can you divide locally where what you call the fixed type and the promiscuous type exist?—I could do so, but I can't say that I am prepared to do so to-day. I must make the excuse to the Commission that I have had a great deal else to do, and this evidence has taken me a great deal of time. It would require me to go over—which I should be very happy to do and to send a statement on that subject to the Commission—a number of manuscript pencil notes which I made during my tour.

10558. You can't say whether you consider the fixed type to exist, perhaps, in Connemara or in any particular place?—Certainly. The fixed type exists on the sea-board and towards the West; it was when I came inland to the "borderland" that I found the promiscuous type of animals. Roughly speaking, I should imagine that the fixed type exists rather to the west of the blue line on the map.

10559. Do you remember where you saw what you call the *melange*?—Certainly; I remember the two places where we saw what I call the *melange*. They were Foxford and Swinford.

10560. Does your remark apply to Donegal?—I didn't go to Donegal.

10561. Chairman.—You didn't go to the South either?—No, I didn't go to the South.

10562. Mr. La Touche.—You had expressed an opinion in favour of the Hackney sire before you made this tour?—I had expressed an opinion on the Hackney sire to carry out the objects explained to me in the letter.

10563. And the result of your tour was to corroborate you in this previously-expressed opinion?—Entirely.

10564. And you were influenced to some extent, I conclude, by the descriptions that the farmers gave of the horse they wanted?—No; I don't think I was influenced by that at all. I mentioned that only as a fact. I was asked to form an opinion, and I formed it independently of all considerations except what I thought was to the advantage of the country.

10565. Had you taken into consideration the possibility of breeding by a stallion that was got by a thoroughbred horse out of a mare that was got by a thoroughbred horse?—Twelve years ago I expressed a very strong opinion upon that subject with regard to hunter-breeding—in favour of it. I may, perhaps, be anticipating, but at the end of the Scheme which I supply I state that, "from the point of view of true hunter-breeding only, I have another suggestion to make if it is asked for by the Commission. I do not pretend to be a hunter-breeder."

10566. I take it that for these districts you would consider the Hackney sire would be a more suitable animal than the horse bred as I have described?—Yes.

10567. Why?—Because I think the stock would be more easily saleable.

10568. You mean on account of the action?—Yes.

10569. You found the mares there very deficient in action?—The mares were deficient in action.

10570. Do you think the action of the Hackney which some people would characterize as extravagant

would be likely to become good and true when crossed with an animal with no action at all?—I don't think it would be as high as the Hackney action, but I think it would be both good and true so long as you chose true action in your Hackney. Of course there are Hackneys that have bad action; I am prepared to deal with the question of Hackney action from that point of view.

10571. I was only asking a question with reference to the evidence you have given as regards your tour in these congested districts. The horse required for the work done in the congested districts is not a very high-class one I take it?—I should think not for the local work.

10572. Do you think that high action is at all essential for an animal that has got to go along mountain paths and carry creels on his back and draw seaweed?

CHAIRMAN.—Mr. Burdett-Coutts goes into all these questions a little later on

Witness.—May I be permitted to answer that question, because it deals with certain propositions which I should like to submit to the Commission as regards profit in horse-breeding, and the most important of them is that no effort to make horse-breeding pay can be successful unless the production of the highest type of horse for any particular purpose is aimed at. I think you will see the bearing of that proposition upon your question.

CHAIRMAN.—I am only anxious to keep the questions as far as possible within the various headings as you put them down.

Witness.—My object in the advice I gave was to enable the people in these districts to breed a horse which would do their country work, but at the same time give them an opportunity of breeding—and the more often the better—more valuable specimens which they could sell well.

10573. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think the ordinary mare you saw in your tour was capable of breeding the highest type of any sort of horses?—I think the mares were capable of breeding very largely a better type than they do now. You cannot of course jump to the highest place at once in the horse-breeding.

10574. Lord ASHTOWN.—The type you proposed to breed there was the stepping pony?—Yes, the stepping pony or stepping cob.

10575. Trusting as much as anything to the action to sell?—Yes; and improving the substance of the native stock.

10576. Mr. CAREW.—You say that the Hackney is only fit for getting harness produce? I think that is one of the conclusions you give in this abstract?—I should like to explain that at some greater length when I come to that part.

10577. Mr. WRENCH.—Might not the fixed type that you allude to in the mares that you saw largely arise from the conditions under which these animals have lived for years?—I should think the defects in the type might arise, and probably they may have dwindled in size from their treatment, but I don't think the type arose from that.

10578. You think that the type arose from some special breed or some special cross originally?—I think so.

10579. And you think that the best results would be obtained from these mares by crossing them with a prepotent sire?—Yes; I think that is very important.

10580. Do you think that a Hackney or such a hunter sire as you described would be the most prepotent?—A Hackney decidedly.

10581. Have you had any experience of breeding from hunter sires?—Yes, I have. I have a very elaborate analysis of all the crossing that I have done in my stud. I am perfectly willing to answer of course any question that is asked me.

10582. Supposing that a really good thoroughbred was stationed in the districts you saw what do you think would be the result?—I am inclined to think that it would be very much the result I did see from the bad thoroughbreds with some slight improvement perhaps and with more soundness, but I still think that you would get a 15 hands horse without much bone and certainly with no action, and without what I call substance.

10683. Do you think that it would pay these small farmers to try breeding polo ponies as well as it would pay them to breed the animal you have described from a Hackney?—That I am not able to say. I imagine that the value of a polo pony depends very largely, like the value of a hunter, upon his character, that is upon his performances; whereas there is a very marked difference from the market point of view between that and a stepping cob. In order to sell a stepping cob you need know nothing about him except his shapes and his action.

10584. And do you think there is a demand for the class of cob which could be bred from the mares you saw?—Yes. I think there is always a demand for a good cob, I should like to say that what I call the best specimens—the plums—from such breeds would sell well in England, whereas the rank and file would do the local work as they do it now.

10585. You think that the produce of the Hackney with the mares you saw would be quite competent to do any work that would be required on the farms in these districts?—I should think so.

10586. Would crossing the native mares with the Hackney produce mares from which more valuable animals could be bred afterwards?—Yes. Decidedly you can build a breed up.

10587. So that in addition to producing saleable animals a better breed of horses would be built up in time?—I should think that the second crop would be better than the first.

10588. And the third time you would cross again with a Hackney?—Decidedly.

10589. And you think that that would produce a still more valuable animal?—Yes; I think the improvement would be progressive.

10590. CHAIRMAN.—Have you ever visited these districts since your tour?—Never.

10591. You know nothing about the actual results?—Nothing, except from hearsay.

10592. You have a stud at Brookfield?—Yes; and I also have a large farm of about a thousand acres in Hertfordshire and a large farm in Yorkshire.

10593. Can you give us some information about these studs?—I perhaps may be permitted to mention very briefly the origin of my stud. I felt the truth of the two propositions which I have submitted to the Commission. In the first place, that in a horse-breeding country it is economically wrong to exclude from the purview of breeders the production of the harness horse, and secondly, that to confine the sires of a horse-breeding country to thoroughbreds is tantamount to excluding the profitable production of the harness horse. Side by side with that, I found that foreign governments had for thirty or forty years been exporting our stallions of the harness breeds, and that, whereas thirty years before I had founded my stud, England or Ireland used to supply itself with harness horses, that at that time a vast number of good harness horses—I am not speaking of the tram or omnibus horses—were coming over from abroad, that we had been exporting the raw material and were taking it back in the shape of a manufactured article for harness purposes. I found that some of these breeds were in danger almost of being depleted, and at first without any idea of what the stud would grow to, and certainly without any commercial object or any idea that it would turn into a business, I started it, being determined to preserve a nucleus of each of these breeds and try experiments in crossing. The whole subject obtained a good deal of publicity, and the value of these breeds as breeds, as solid breeds so to speak, with hereditary characteristics of their own, became

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so important that I rather abandoned the idea of crossing for some years in order to get a strong nucleus of each breed and to be able to find out which strains and families in it were the most valuable. I am not qualified to say whether my stud is a good or bad one, but at any rate I can say this, that it is five times as large, I should think, as any other stud in England; that people came to it and have continuously come to it from all parts of the world to purchase stallions and mares for breeding purposes; and that I am generally credited with obtaining the highest prices for my harness horses. The fundamental basis of my stud has been the Hackney stallion, and at least 90 per cent. of the horses I have sold have been by a Hackney. Now with regard to the number.

10594. That is at Brookfield?—It is all the same. Of course I put out of these statements the thoroughbred stud which I have at Newmarket. I have some thoroughbred mares in my Brookfield stud. Since its foundation, roughly speaking, 1,500 horses have passed through my hands, including those now in my stud. My stud now consists of 507 horses which for the information of the Commission I have classified according to the breeds of the sires. Of Hackneys pure-bred there are 375, by Hackney stallions out of coaching mares 20, by Hackney stallions out of other mares 18, total for the Hackney sire division 413. Of coach horses pure bred I have 54, of thoroughbreds pure bred 8, of horses by thoroughbreds out of other mares 7, of ponies pure bred 15; of American trotters, that is the only foreign animal I have in my stud, I have 3 mares which I have kept for use, but I am beginning to breed from them; and of animals of unknown breeding I have 7. Now as to prices, I submit the average of prices obtained at my sales by public auction. These sales are annual and are composed almost entirely of harness horses. There have been three—viz., 1894, 1895, and 1896. At those three sales 179 horses were sold for a total of £32,124 4*s.*, making an average of £185 for each horse. Of these 179 horses eleven were by thoroughbred sires; their average was £109—while the general average was £185. Eight were by coaching stallions; their average was identical with the general average; all the rest—viz., 160—were by Hackney stallions. I also submit as a statement of the value of pure Hackneys, if it is any use to the Commission, the average of prices obtained for stock by my leading Hackney stallion as extracted from my stallion book for 1897. Money realised by the stock is after all the safest criterion of the value of a sire. Of Candidate's stock sold from the Brookfield stud up to the present date for breeding purposes the stallions have averaged £1,071 5*s.* each stallion, and the mares £172 12*s.* 6*d.* each mare. The total average for all the horses of sorts sired by Candidate and sold from this stud has been £322 6*s.* 10*d.* each animal. The harness horses included in this average made an average price of £202. I now submit an analysis of the horses that I have bred myself which I have carefully prepared for the information of the Commission. The result of it is that subtracting the full thoroughbreds which are not pertinent to the inquiry there remain 463 horses bred by myself, of which 373 have been by Hackney stallions, 300 pure Hackneys; 20 out of coaching mares, 6 out of thoroughbred mares, 38 out of half-bred mares, 9 out of pony mares; sixty-nine have been by coaching stallion, (58 pure coachers, 8 out of hackney mares, 3 out of half-bred mares); eleven have been by pony stallions (nine pure ponies, two out of hackney mares); and ten have been by thoroughbred stallions (excluding pure thoroughbreds, 2 out of hackney mares, 6 out of half-bred mares, 2 out of pony mares). I only give the analysis in order to show the extent and variety of my horse-breeding operations. These do not include about 200 mares in my stud served by my stallions in 1896 and due to foal this year.

10595. Mr. Wrench.—When you allude to the average of a particular horse what horse are you referring to?—I was referring to "Candidate." I will now deal with the two propositions upon which I have stated my stud was founded. The first is that in a horse-breeding country it is economically wrong to exclude the production of the harness horse. This I support by the fact that the demand for harness horses is certain and universal. It may be so for hunters, that I cannot say; but for harness horses they are wanted all over the world, and there is a constantly increasing demand for the best harness horses of all sorts in England. I support it secondly by this, that harness horses are brought to saleable age and condition with the minimum of risk to the breeder. The harness horse has simply to be taken up from grass at three off, fed well for a few weeks in a loose box, then run out on a halter, and if he has good action and shapes there will be plenty of dealers to buy him. The breeder has not to make him into harness or anything else; whereas my experience is that you don't give a profitable price to the breeder for a hunter until you know whether he can hunt or not, namely, that the breeder has first, as a rule, to stand the risks of making him a hunter, which are very serious risks. I support the proposition thirdly by the practice of other countries. Their whole movement has been to improve their harness or general purpose horse. Of course horse breeding is carried on under government departments there, and they have all the help of systematised experience and government money, and so on, and I believe the practice of most countries has been to endeavour to improve their harness horses or general purpose horses. When I was in Italy I found to my surprise that there were 260 Hackney stallions serving there. Then the system which I have always thought the right system to apply to this country or to any other country, the system of the foreign *haras*, of supplying a variety of stallions in order to enable the breeder to make a choice, is to my mind a better practice than to attempt to confine him to any particular breed. Fourthly and lastly I support the proposition by reference to the value of harness horse-breeding to the Eastern Counties and in Yorkshire—with respect to which I don't know if the Commission has had evidence. Of that I have a very long and exhaustive experience, and I should say that there is no part of England where the returns of the horse-breeder have been in any way comparable to those derived by the farmers of Yorkshire and the Eastern counties from the use of Hackney stallions. Plenty of thoroughbred stallions have been located there. They have, to a large extent, disappeared under the sheer force of the demand for harness horses. I read in a pamphlet, which I believe has been before the Commission, a statement from a hunter dealer to the following effect:—"Men who buy the highest class of harness horses for the London market do not go into Hackney breeding countries of England to find them." No statement could be wider from the truth. In my opinion and experience, putting aside what is called the "barouche" horse in London, at least 80 per cent. of the highest priced horses in London from 15 to 15.3 hands come from Yorkshire or the Eastern Counties. In these districts the harness horse-breeder knows that it would spell ruin to use the thoroughbred stallion. But he has always had his choice of doing so. That is all I have to say upon my first proposition, viz., that of the value of harness horse-breeding to a country.

10596. Chairman.—Have you any figures on that point?—It would be impossible for me to give any except from my own stud. The whole of the breeding operations of my stud have been entirely under my own hand. No mare has ever been put to a stallion in my stud except at my discretion. In the same way I had never bought a horse up to two or three years ago except by seeing it myself; of late years

I have to leave the purchase of harness horses to a great extent to my manager. This experience of the districts in question has enabled me to know, apart from my own purchases, what horses were bought, the prices paid for them, and the class to which they belonged. And I have no hesitation in saying that if you can take as a class the highest priced harness horses, that is from 15·1 or 15 hands to 15·3, the horses you see in the *Bois*, and in Hyde Park in phaetons or Victorias, stepping horses, leaders in teams, &c., 80 per cent. of them are from those districts which are confined to harness horse-breeding.

My second proposition was that the Hackney is essentially the breed for producing harness horses. I argue that point with a very long and extensive experience of the Hackney.

10597. You say that to confine the sires of a horse-breeding county to thoroughbreds is tantamount to excluding the profitable production of the harness horse?—That is my opinion. With much respect I will place this evidence in the hands of the Commission. There is a great deal of it I need not go through now. There is a point about the Hackney type which I should like to make, and that is that the Hackney type is the correct one in relation to the draught of carriages. There are two forces by which draught can be effected. The first is the application of weight to weight. Of these an obvious instance is the cart horse. A cart horse by simply leaning the greater part of his weight in the front of his centre of gravity will draw an ordinary vehicle. The second is nervous or muscular energy. Of this we used to see plenty of instances in the streets of London when omnibuses were drawn by tall, weedy hunter mis-fits by thoroughbred stallions; and it is found all over the south of Europe, where light, shelly horses are seen struggling and fighting with the weight behind them. A very distressing spectacle it is. The only proper method of draught, and that which is least exertion to the horse, is the combination of these two forces, or the mean between them. That you have in the Hackney when applied to harness work. He has substance enough not to put an undue strain upon his muscular energy, and he has energy enough to make full use of his substance. There is a point with regard to action which I was asked——

10598. Mr. La Touche.—Yes, as regards the probable result of a cross between an animal with high action and an animal with no action at all?—I should like to state, in the first place, with regard to a point that was made by Lord Tredegar about hind action. I myself cannot help thinking that the flexing of the hock which is commonly a hereditary property of the Hackney and which no other breed possesses in anything like the same degree in the trot, would be a very valuable attribute in the hunter. It would enable the hunter to jump off his hind legs and to collect himself better in a cramped place. I myself have ridden several horses that I can remember, thoroughbred hunters, and nearly thoroughbred hunters, great galloping horses, very bold jumpers, but if you got them into a cramped place it was extremely difficult to collect them on their hocks. If you could give some more of this flexing of the hock to hunters it would be better and advantageous. I was going to speak on the question of the utility of this high action, and, in my opinion, high action although not artificial in the Hackney has been developed by his treatment. He was originally a trotting horse. He was a horse that was put to long fast work, and undoubtedly he always had —you can see it from the old prints, and from what you hear from the oldest men in the country—great trotting action; that is to say, a natural propensity to throw his foot forward a great distance, and to a certain extent to raise his knees, certainly a great deal more than the American trotter does. When the necessity for this long work disappeared, and the value of the show properties of the Hackney increased, the horse was reined in by the bit, and urged on by spur or whip. His natural propensity to throw his foreleg out had to expend itself somehow, and gradually more and more as he was put to a slower pace he threw his knee up to satisfy his superfluous energy. That was only the development of a natural property. Now, if you take the reverse; if you start from a horse with high action and you drive him for a long distance the natural result will be: it won't make him any the less a road horse, it will simply lower his knee and lengthen his stride. The saleable value of this high action has been found out in America. The American trotter undoubtedly has a large admixture of Hackney blood in my opinion to start with; the high action has been for the purpose of excessive speed bred out of him, but now, when they see the saleable value of high action, they are able by what they call "checking and gaiting the horse to be a knee actor," to produce high action. I don't think that this explanation leads me to the conclusion that high action is detrimental in any way to work, but that if you put a horse to long work you will lower the knee action. It is, therefore, suitable for fast and for slow work in the trot. It is a hereditary property; there is no question about that. If you turn a Hackney mare and foal out of their box the first time you will find that the foal will trot and steps high alongside its dam, while a thoroughbred foal will canter. It is a very valuable property of course for selling harness horses. On the question of soundness I believe the Hackney to be the soundest breed that exists in these islands. That is my experience, but I will submit to the Commission a letter from a man who is one of the leading veterinary surgeons in Yorkshire, whom it may possibly be your province to call—giving his opinion of the Hackney breed, based on a very full experience of 42 years.

10599. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—What is his name?—Jebson. I consider him one of the best veterinary surgeons and one of the best authorities on horses in England.

10600. Chairman.—What is the letter?—I will read it if you like:—

"Pocklington, Yorks.,

"February 27th, 1897.

"Dear Sir.—In answer to your letter asking me for my opinion of the Hackney, based on my long experience of the breed, I beg to say that I have been in practice as a veterinary surgeon for forty-two years, and have always had three horses going, and five for the last fifteen years. During that time I have tried all breeds—thoroughbred, half-bred, Arab, coaching, and blood-crossed—but have not found any animal so pleasant, either for saddle or harness work, as the Hackney, and for style and endurance none can equal them. I have found blood horses to do better in winter than in summer; they cannot stand the hard roads during the summer months, consequently not able to do half the work. The best animal for all purposes, in my opinion, is sire and dam Hackney, grandam by a thoroughbred. I have known some of the best of hunters with a cross of Hackney, the latter giving them more back and build, greatly improving their staying powers. I have also known some splendid harness horses by a big bold Hackney from half-bred mares. Taylor's old 'Sir Charles' got some very valuable horses from light, active cart mares (travelling the same district for nearly twenty years); the same might be said of many other Hackneys. Then as to soundness, we have far more blood screws than we have Hackneys. A ringbone is very rarely found on a Hackney, and so often found on the blood horse. Then as to their wind, whistling and roaring, you have amongst the blood and coaching five to one of the Hackney. Then the Hackney is more hardy than any other breed except the cart horse, on that account more suitable for a cold climate. As to the financial part, they cost less, and they are either ready for sale at three off, or the fourth year they can do light work on a farm,

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earning their food and at the same time getting stamina and stability for their work in after years. The demand also for the Hackney is greater than any other animal, being equally suitable for both saddle and harness, having taken the place of the old-fashioned coach-horse for driving purposes."

On the question of tractability I think the Hackney breed is the most tractable of all. Then there is the question of endurance. I should like to preface what I have to say upon the question of the endurance of the Hackney with this observation—that of course a great many of the finest harness horses are kept all their lives for show purposes. Not for the show ring; but I mean, if a man has got a beautiful stepper he likes to keep it as such, and he does not ride or drive it long distances for the very reason I mentioned, that to do so would be to lower the knee action. To ask a horse so kept and used to do a long journey is obviously unfair, if he cannot do it, it is no argument against him. In my opinion you might just as well ask an untrained hunter, not conditioned or galloped or trained at all, to live with the Belvoir bitches from Coston Covert to Woodwell Head and back again, as to ask show Hackneys which had been used every day for town work to go thirty miles at ten miles an hour. It has become quite an imputation upon a Hackney that he is not a horse of endurance because people take him entirely unconditioned for long work and put him to it without thinking that a long distance sometimes requires special condition. Endurance is unquestionably an old property in the Hackney breed. They were the horses, of course, that used to perform all the road work in the North and the East of England, and if you take the tests by which the great horses were tried in those days you will find them tests of endurance entirely. Three miles trotted in nine minutes, and seventeen miles in fifty-six minutes carrying thirteen stone—this was "Marshland Shales," one of the great early sires of the Hackney; sixteen miles in one hour carrying sixteen stone—this was Wroot's "Pretender," in the early part of the century. I can give you others, and these are perfectly authentic cases. Very often they went thirty miles to market and thirty miles back, and I can give you hundreds of specific instances of endurance in the Hackneys in former and in recent times.

10601. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Was that any particular breed of Hackney or the Hackney generally?—I have taken three noted Hackney sires, just as you would take the thoroughbred.

Mr. CAREW.—Three strains?—Three different strains. All more or less about the same time. Now, the necessity for all that long work disappeared after the introduction of railways. I would undertake in many cases of individuals amongst my own Hackneys—certainly after two generations of training and practice—to train and condition them to do any work and go any pace that could reasonably be asked of a horse. I want to give a specific instance of my own experience. I have driven Hackneys, and high-stepping Hackneys, for the past seventeen years. I have constantly driven a pair out to my farm in Hertfordshire, which is seventeen miles from my town house and twelve miles from my stud, and driven them back the same day at over ten miles an hour. And these same horses after a day's rest I could bring out in Piccadilly or the Park, and put them on the middle bar and they would be the show horses of the town. Last summer I took with me on a tour of visits in the North of England a team of what I call ponies, all bred by myself. The leaders were 14.1½, and were by my first pony stallion, "Tommy"; the wheelers are 14.2½, and are pure bred Hackneys, both in the book. After driving them for some 600 miles, generally from twenty-five to thirty miles a day, I finished up with a journey to which I call the attention of the Commission. It was made in the Lake district, which, as everyone knows, is hilly. The whole distance compassed in the day by the team was forty-eight and a half miles. I take off three and a half miles of slow work going to the station. The remaining forty-five miles were done with two stoppages of an hour each at a decimal point over ten and a quarter miles an hour. The last five miles were done in twenty-two minutes, and the horses were fit and well the next day. These are showy Hackneys—horses with high action; horses I can sell at a very high price. Finally, I say that a few Hackney strains are undoubtedly soft. The same thing exists with thoroughbreds and with most other breeds. In the Hackney breed there have been strains where cart blood has been taken in to get greater size. This can be detected in the shapes, and where it exists, it is, in my opinion, a fatal blot for breeding purposes. What I say about the Hackney is that he is not in his general type a riding horse. My opinion on this point differs no doubt from that of so-called Hackney men. The riding type has been greatly developed in recent years, and in my own stud I have paid special attention to quality and shoulders. If you get a Hackney with fine shoulders he is a very good horse to ride on the road; he is often a good horse to canter; he is rarely good in the gallop. As a road hack, where the chief gait is the trot, he is safer than the thoroughbred, but his action although more showy, is not so smooth or elastic. The articulation of both the fetlock and the shoulder is stiffer. I can show many specimens which do not deserve this criticism, but in the main I believe it to be correct. I prefer in the riding horse to have blood on the top; at the same time it must be remembered that from the earliest times one of the chief uses of the Hackney was as a weight-carrying hack, and in that capacity some specimens fetch very long prices in the present day. I have added a remark about the classification and judging of Hackneys as hacks at English shows. I consider it deserves the strongest possible censure. Unless a hack is something else than a riding horse, three-fourths of the horses in such classes have no business to be there at all; they are simply harness horses shown in the saddle, and the first prize is given to the highest stepper. That is all I have to say about the Hackney.

10603. CHAIRMAN.—These horses you speak of were they called Hackneys in those days or what?—No; I consider the name Hackney is ridiculous and meaningless. What happened was this:—Before the Stud Book was established these horses used to be called in Norfolk, Norfolk trotters, or cobs, and also Hackneys; in Yorkshire they were called Roadsters and Nags. Well the two sections of breeders of this class of horses had a tremendous dispute, and the Yorkshire men were going to break away and adopt a society of their own, because they could not get these horses called Roadsters—and in my opinion Roadster was the only name for the breed. It was the old name in Yorkshire, and in all the old papers and programmes of shows fifty years ago, that I have seen, the classes were Roadster classes or Roadster mare and foal. And the road is the proper place for the Hackney; that is the *differentia* between the Hackney and the thoroughbred horse, and for the road in my opinion the Hackney is the best horse.

10604. When was the Hackney Stud Book instituted?—I think in 1884.

Lord ASHTOWN.—I think volume 14 is just out, that would make it 1883.

10605. CHAIRMAN.—There were societies in Yorkshire or Norfolk before that?—Not breeding societies. That was the date of the Stud Book movement—the movement, so to speak, which collected these breeds into Stud Books.

10606. Then the Hackney of those days you speak of was somewhat a different animal to the Hackney of the present time?—I don't think myself that he had as much high action, and I think that probably he was smaller than the horse which I want to get

from Hackneys, at any rate as I want them to develop. The question of size is a very important one, and undoubtedly the Yorkshire Hackney was bigger than the Norfolk Hackney, and I am afraid in some cases cart-blood in the Eastern counties was taken into the Hackney in order to improve size.

10607. Can you tell the Commission how the Hackney has developed from the beginning of the century; how far the breed has been kept up; how far it is a distinct breed, and so on?—Upon that point my opinion is very clear that the breed has been very carefully kept up, as carefully as it could be kept up without a stud book. I have spent a great deal of my time talking with the oldest Hackney breeders, and long before the improved Stud Book came in amongst Hackney breeders. Some of them are men of eighty years of age, who won't even now enter their horses in the Hackney Stud Book; but they have told me the care with which they have followed certain strains, and the records that they kept which are rather oral records than written records, of the strains of their own horses, and they undoubtedly had a distinct type and a distinct line of stock too, which was kept clear I should say for the whole of this century—perhaps not the whole, but for the past fifty or sixty years—which has been kept clear of thoroughbred blood and crossed with itself.

10608. Mr. La Touche.—Kept clear of thoroughbred blood?—Yes, undoubtedly; but there was a great deal of thoroughbred blood in the beginning, more in the Yorkshire than in the Norfolk Hackney. I will deal with that when I come to the question of crosses. I consider if it is patiently done and a benefit from the first cross is not looked for, that the introduction of thoroughbred blood into the Hackney blood would improve it.

10609. Chairman.—And the change as regards action has taken place from the change in the requirements?—Exactly.

10610. And if necessary you could revert to the former action?—I think so most decidedly. You see these are very extraordinary instances, sixteen miles an hour carrying sixteen stone. I don't think any thing could test endurance and weight-carrying power better than that. When I had a place in Norfolk, it was fourteen miles from the hall-door to Norwich station, and it was a bad road, and I had three Hackneys, which I have over and over again driven one or two minutes within the hour, that fourteen miles with myself, my luggage, groom and servant. I consider that an admirable performance for a horse, for when you hear people speak of fourteen miles an hour, they generally mean "at the rate of."

10611. You lay it down as an axiom that in a horse-breeding country it is economically wrong to exclude from the purview of breeders the production of the harness horse; may I take it that you mean that the country should endeavour to produce the class of horse, whatever it may be, which it appears naturally to be best suited to produce?—I think that a natural law would lead a country to do so, and if a country was best suited to produce hunters, the breeders would stick to hunter sires. My argument is that it is wrong to confine magisterially and draconically the breeding operations of any country in a particular direction that may seem well to you—of course I am not speaking of you personally—that you ought to give scope to the breeder. If it spoils his stock, and if he does not breed profitable horses from the Hackney, he won't put his mares to them, if he gets more money by breeding hunters he will put his mares to hunter sires.

10612. If he can get them?—If he can get them. I think it would be a very great mistake to try to change the supply, if it is a fixed supply in a country and the class of horses produced is as valuable as you can make it. But I cannot imagine any district in any part of the British Islands where there would not be farmers who would have some mares from which they would wish to breed harness horses, and, therefore, in my opinion it is treating a farmer like a child, and giving him no freedom of judgment, if you don't give him the opportunity of doing what he likes in the matter. If I may illustrate it by the special instance of Ireland, I think the Hackney stallions in the pony districts were right. I think in the promiscuous districts big Hackneys were right, but there I should place equal Hackneys and equal thoroughbreds. I think in the other districts of Ireland, even where hunters are bred, I should place a Hackney stallion alongside perhaps half a dozen hunter stallions.

10613. And you lay down also, that to confine the sires of a horse-breeding country to thoroughbreds is tantamount to excluding the profitable production of the harness horse, and that the Hackney is essentially the breed for producing harness horses?—Yes, those two points I feel sure of.

10614. I don't know whether you are aware that we have had some evidence that many of the London dealers rather prefer for harness purposes, a horse got by a thoroughbred to a horse got by a Hackney or anything else?—Yes, they are job masters.

10615. It does not matter much what they are, but is that compatible with your axiom that confining the sires to thoroughbred horses would be to exclude the profitable production of harness horses?—May I make my answer with special reference to Ireland. The harness horses produced now in Ireland are of two classes—the little weeds that go in an Irish car, very excellent little horses, but horses from which there is no chance for a farmer—whatever he makes out of them—there is no chance of his producing a high-class horse that will bring a good price; the other class are what I call job-horses, the large harness horse, which is generally hunter-bred, often a misfit, and always by a hunter sire. You have had evidence about these latter horses. I don't know whether you have had any evidence as to the young horses that are imported into Ireland, grazed there for a year or two and then sold as Irish horses. These larger Irish horses are in the main job-master's horses, they are tall leggy horses, and they have not much action, and if I were to put them in my sale, which I consider a good test of the market, I could not sell them at all. Now I have twice sent my manager over to Ireland, and he is one of the best judges of a horse that I know; the first time he travelled all over, and came back without a single horse, and the second time he brought back four 16 hands horses. I made a profit on one horse, but on the other three horses I made a large loss, simply because though they showed some action when run in hand, when put in harness the action disappeared, and I had not a horse in my stud that would equal them for want of action. Those two classes produced in Ireland leave out the whole middle place in the market. All the fine horses from 15 to 15.3, all the horses for Victorias, broughams, and T-carts, Ralli carts, and other class of vehicles that people drive themselves; this class of horse absolutely does not exist in Ireland and the sire capable of producing him does not exist there. To my mind, Ireland with its great advantages for horse-breeding might add to its horse-breeding operations the production of that class of horse which is a profitable horse for the breeder.

10616. All I want to point out is that we have had in evidence that it is profitable to breed harness horses by thoroughbred sires, because there is a considerable demand for them, a larger demand in fact than the supply; the breeder gets a good price for them?—A horse was sold at my sale last year, a Hackney, he was what I call a third-class horse, in the gradation of merit of the horses I sell, he was taken to Ireland and won eight first prizes in harness at the shows there. My opinion is that the high-class harness horse, the profitable harness horse does not exist in Ireland; the particular type which the job master uses does exist there.

10617. You told us that to make breeding pay the

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production of the highest type of some kind must be aimed at?—Yes.

10618. To return to the western districts of Ireland, do you think it is possible to produce anything of a very high type of animal in these congested districts?—I should think it would be a long and difficult task, but I think you could improve the type.

10619. In your opinion would it not be likely that the highest type that you could successfully produce would be something in the nature of the type of the aboriginal pony that is there?—Oh, no; I think you might greatly improve that, and breed stepping cobs with quality from a great many of these ponies.

10620. An animal that would fetch a good price?—Oh, yes; over there. If he would fetch a good price here he ought to make a price over there. This Connemara pony was an animal that sold as a foal for £4 10*s*.

10621. I am not talking of the commercial value, but that class of animal having developed itself there naturally, I should have thought, that to endeavour to improve it and get a superior breed of ponies might, perhaps, have enabled you to arrive at the highest type of animal that the district can produce; not looking at it from a commercial point of view?—I don't like to argue the question on a basis that does not look at it from a commercial point of view.

10622. When you talk of the highest type you don't mean the animal that would sell for the highest money?—I think the two are identical. I think the animal which sells for the most money is the best animal of its type.

10623. Quite so; of its type?—I don't want to alter the type.

10624. But not as selecting the one type against another, you don't mean that the type suitable for any country or district is the type of horse that would produce the most money for the time being?—Oh, no; I don't mean that, of course not.

10625. What do you think would become of the misfits resulting from the Hackney blood in Ireland; we have had a good deal of evidence that in the best horse-breeding part of the country—I am not talking of the congested districts—the result of the half-bred mare crossed with the thoroughbred stallion was either to produce a high-class hunter or a high-class and valuable carriage horse, or failing that, a good remount, always worth money, the misfit fetches money as a general utility horse or remount; what would become of the misfit between the Hackney sire and the half-bred mare?—They would fetch as much as misfits.

10626. For what purpose would they be used?—The low draught purposes of towns.

10627. In Ireland?—Yes; well, I suppose every horse gravitates to England if it is good enough.

10628. Do you think they would fetch a considerable price in England?—No, I don't think misfits of any kind make a profitable price, you must aim at the best and make a profit out of your best, you make a loss on your misfits in all breeds.

10629. You think so?—Unquestionably.

10630. Do you know what price they give for cavalry remounts in Ireland?—I suppose they give about £35.

10631. Lord Londonderry.—£35 for the light and £40 for the heavier?—I don't think I have ever bred horses by a Hackney stallion that I could not sell or get from £30 to £40 for.

10632. Chairman.—I am not talking of you or your stud, I am talking of the small farmers?—I was not at the moment talking of pure-bred Hackneys either. I was talking of horses that came out without any action out of half-bred mares, and I think the small farmers could get about that for his Hackney misfits. I should think so. Of course you are speaking, I believe, of hunter-breeding districts where the mares have size, and where the misfits would probably have a certain amount of size.

10633. Of course what I want to get from you is your opinion as to what the effect of the introduction of this Hackney blood would be among the small farmers and breeders in Ireland. I gather from you that you think the best of their produce would fetch a good price, and the misfits would at any rate be about the same value as the misfits from a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, I should think so. If you can tell me or if anybody can tell me that in Ireland there is a district where there are nothing but hunter mares, and mares thoroughly capable of producing good hunters, why then I should say keep the Hackney stallions out of those districts, but I do not imagine there is any such district, and in every district wherever you were to draw a circumference you would find a certain amount of farmers who had mares that would not mate well with thoroughbreds.

10634. It appears to be the fact that over a very large portion of Ireland the country from some natural cause or other seems to be particularly adapted to breeding hunters, at any rate they have succeeded in producing a very superior class of animal of that kind, and I gather from you that that being so you think it would be economically correct that in those parts of the country they should continue to direct their attention to the producing of the kind of animal that has been proved to be most valuable?—Yes; but I would not compel them to breed one class of horse exclusively.

10635. No, certainly not?—By confining the stallions to thoroughbreds—you do so compel them.

10636. You would like them to have their choice?—I would like them to have their choice.

10637. Then you do not think that the introduction of the Hackney blood would have any bad effect upon the superiority which Ireland has attained in the production of high-class hunters?—I cannot say that I am prepared to say that. I should be very chary of saying that without personal experience. I have, as I shall show you, in eight specific crosses, bred fillies from hunter mares by Hackney stallions, which fillies I consider in their shapes and action and size look suited to produce hunters. I cannot say that they would produce hunters. I cannot say how the hunters would gallop, or jump, or last, but I do find in the Hackneys certain properties of great value to the hunter, whatever properties they may possess which could deteriorate the hunter.

10638. Are there not many hunters bred in England by Hackney sires?—I myself don't consider the Hackney a hunter sire; but there is no doubt about it. You had the evidence to which I listened of Lord Tredegar, and there is no doubt about it that "Old Fireaway," a great Hackney stallion, got some very good hunters, long low horses that had considerable staying power. This letter of Jebson's, to which I referred, states also that he has known capital hunters—"I have known some of the best of hunters with a cross of Hackney." I should imagine that meant by thoroughbred stallions out of a mare by a Hackney, "the latter giving them more back and build and greatly improving their staying powers."

10639. Are there do you know as a matter of fact many hunters bred in the same parts of the country where Hackneys are largely bred?—I think not; not by Hackneys.

10640. I mean bred at all—are as many hunters bred for instance in Yorkshire as formerly?—The Hackney district in Yorkshire is rather circumscribed, in that district there are a certain number of hunters bred and all over Yorkshire.

10641. As many in that district as there were before?—I should think not, I should think the Hackney had pushed the hunter-breeding out, in the Eastern Counties and in parts of Yorkshire, certainly.

10642. Do you think its introduction into the hunter-breeding parts of Ireland would be likely to be followed by the same results, or I will put it in this way, if it did produce the same results would you think it was from natural economic causes and was

therefore economically sound?—If it did I should think it was sound, but I don't believe it would, because I believe you have a very valuable article in the Irish hunter. I think myself that there are certain tendencies in the thoroughbred sire, increased by constantly crossing with a thoroughbred sire, which require most careful consideration with regard to correcting these tendencies, but whether that correction should be applied in pure hunter districts by the introduction of Hackney blood, I am not prepared to say. I at least believe that the introduction of Hackney blood would enable the farmers to breed some profitable harness horses, but I am not prepared to say, that from the point of view of hunter-breeding alone the introduction of the Hackney into a pure hunter-breeding district would be a good thing.

10643. When you say you think the farmer should have a choice you mean that they should have an opportunity of sending their mares to a good thoroughbred sire or a good Hackney sire at equal fees?—Yes.

10644. Of course you are aware that at present nearly all the Hackney sires in Ireland are Government sires?—Yes.

10645. And that therefore the question of choice has never been put before the farmer, for instance in the congested districts there are no thoroughbred sires at all to be compared with the Hackney sires standing at the same fee?—Well, the logical conclusion of my argument would be to put some other thoroughbreds there and let them try both. I have very little doubt myself that if you were to put a fine big boned Hackney alongside the best hunter sire you could get farmers who would go to the Hackney in those districts.

10646. Do you know at all whether buyers for foreign Governments buy many Hackneys or Hackney bred horses for remounts in England?—I believe they buy most of their remount horses in Ireland, and I have already stated that so far as action goes I consider that where the question of show properties as forming a saleable commodity does not come in the thoroughbred is a better sire for a riding horse than a Hackney. I have some very interesting specific instances of crossing.

10647. Lord Londonderry.—I want to ask you if I am correct in gauging from your answers that you consider in pure hunter-breeding districts like Westmeath, Cork, Tipperary, it would be running a considerable risk to have a Hackney stallion standing there with the chance of farmers preferring that stallion to the hunter stallion for their mares?—I think there might be a risk, a very great risk of the breeders using the hackney.

10648. It would militate very much against the hunter-breeding?—Upon that I rather reserve my opinion.

10649. What I meant is you thought there would be a risk with the two put together that the Hackney might appear the more attractive from his action and showiness than the thoroughbred horse for hunter getting, and consequently the mare that had perhaps bred good hunters to a thoroughbred horse would be transferred to the Hackney stallion?—I think very likely that the Hackney stallion would be tried and my whole remarks upon this subject—it is a difficult subject to express a final opinion on—would lead me to this conclusion, that where you have a pure hunter district I should put six thoroughbred horses and one Hackney. Where you have a district from which hunters cannot be bred or can only be very sparsely bred, as I believe to be the case in the congested districts I should put one hunter sire and six Hackneys, but I think it is entirely in accordance with the intelligence of the breeder and his self-reliance now-a-days to give him some choice.

10650. Chairman.—You say that you think that the farmer should have a choice as to the sire?—Yes.

10651. And that, speaking broadly, in districts specially adapted to producing hunters, you think the proper proportion would be six thoroughbred sires to one Hackney horse, and that in other districts not naturally adapted to producing a hunter the proportion should be reversed, and should be as six Hackneys to one thoroughbred?—That was not quite, I think, what I said. The first part of it is quite right. In districts like the pony districts of the congested districts I think there should be six Hackneys to one thoroughbred; in the promiscuous districts, where the stock is promiscuous, I believe myself a big Hackney stallion is the most valuable sire, but I should give perfect freedom of choice there to the breeder, and put one Hackney to one thoroughbred.

10652. What I want to ask you on that is whether you think the discriminating intelligence of the average farmer in Ireland can be sufficiently trusted in that matter. You see we have had a certain amount of evidence before us that the farmer, especially the small farmer, is influenced by all kinds of motives in choosing the sire; the popularity of the owner and sire, and a variety of things of that kind come into play. And we have had a large body of evidence to the effect that Ireland somehow or other has achieved a sort of pre-eminence in producing the class of horse that makes a hunter; and if it does not happen to make a hunter it makes a carriage horse, practically equally valuable, and that if it does not turn into a first-class hunter or a first-class carriage horse of that kind, it has a payable value to small farmer as an army remount or general utility horse, and that is attributed by a good many witnesses to the fact that this class of animal is produced by thoroughbred sires, or stallions which are thoroughbred, and by accident not in the Stud Book, or by sires which have a great many thoroughbred strains in them, very nearly thoroughbred; and some witnesses look with a good deal of apprehension to the introduction of the Hackney strain as likely to interfere with that amount of pre-eminence that the country generally has gained in producing that class of horse. There are two questions I should like to ask you, first of all whether, as far as your experience goes, you think that the average farmer in Ireland can be trusted to choose what is really the best kind of sire, best for the general interests of the country; and, whether if the Hackneys were introduced in the way you suggest, granting that they might be very valuable in certain districts of the country, whether the Hackney, when spread through the country generally, might not be detrimental to the general industry of horse-breeding?—With regard to the first question, I think that the Hackney has certain external attractive properties which may dazzle the hunter-breeder, but I think that if he produced a valuable horse which the breeder sold well it would be a justification of his use, and of his being supplied, and I do not think that the supply of a sufficient number of such Hackney stallions to a hunter district would materially interfere with the hunter stock as a breeding stock. I think it possible on that subject—I have carefully reserved a definite opinion—I think it possible that the introduction of the Hackney blood might improve the breeding stock for hunter-breeding, although I do not believe in the first cross of the hunter by a Hackney stallion.

10653. You do not approve of it?—No.

10654. But you think eventually?—I think eventually it might introduce valuable properties. I wish carefully to guard this opinion. The introduction of a Hackney stallion is not what I would suggest from the point of view of true hunter-breeding; that is to say, if the industry of hunter-breeding is so valuable that it is a sufficient compensation for losing profitable harness-breeding, I think that the Hackney stallion should be introduced only with the greatest care; but if you accept the scheme of breeding as one which should give the farmer the opportunity of producing the best of any particular type, and of every particular type within his range, I think

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that the Hackney stallion might be introduced with the result of greatly improving the harness stock, and without materially injuring the hunter stock. From the point of view of pure hunter-breeding it is not what I would suggest.

10655. Well, there is another question arises out of that. I don't know whether you or anybody could give a very definite opinion about it, and that is whether there is anything in the climate or soil or natural cause in Ireland which enables Ireland to compete very successfully, say with England, in the production of hunters, and whether the same causes would operate to the same direction in the production of harness horses,; that is to say, whether Ireland naturally has any advantage over England in producing harness horses that it has over England in producing hunters?—That, of course, would be very difficult to give an opinion about ; my own opinion is that there can be nothing in the climate or the soil of Ireland which would interfere with the production of the best harness horses, but what you want in the hunter is jumping power, speed, bone, and substance, and while Ireland does produce those they can also be produced in other countries if the stock exists there. I believe the real explanation of Ireland being a hunter-breeding country is that they have always bred hunters and they have the hunter stock. I believe also that the tendency of the thoroughbred stallion is towards certain deficiencies, while it possesses the essential properties of the hunter there are certain deficiencies which it encourages, certain defects which ought to be remedied. Now whether they could be remedied by the introduction of the Hackney stallion I am not prepared to give a decisive opinion.

10656. Well, assuming that Ireland has achieved a certain prominence in producing hunters, the question is whether she by some natural causes is peculiarly favourably situated to produce that particular type of horse?—I should think the only cause was because she had the hunter stock and kept it.

10657. By accident?—I would not say by accident, I could not say how, but there it is.

10658. It would be rather natural to suppose that as regards the industry of horse-breeding it had developed in that direction because it was the direction of least resistance, or the most favourable direction that it could develop in?—Well, what does Ireland give to hunters that it could not give to other horses, what does the climate and soil of Ireland give to hunters that it could not give to harness horses, what does the climate and soil of Ireland give to thoroughbreds that it could not give to other breeds of horses. It gives to them bone, quality, endurance—all these things are of value to other breeds. I myself believe that the character of Ireland as a hunter-breeding country is owing to the fact that hunters have always been bred there.

10659. You think if equal attention had been paid to breeding good harness horses she would have equal advantages over England?—Oh, certainly.

10660. I am assuming that experience shows she is able to produce a better class of hunter as a rule than England?—Yes, I think the operation of the same forces under the same circumstances would enable her to produce better harness horses. I think so, I can imagine no reason why not. You have asked me—perhaps it is going back a little—or you put to me some questions about the value of harness horses bred in Ireland, and I answered that you will remember by stating that the whole of what I call the middle of the trade was left out of the purview of Irish breeding, and the two classes of harness horses that are bred in Ireland, the Irish car-horse and the jobmaster's horse are, of course, by thoroughbred stallions. The reason why, in my opinion, the thoroughbred stallion can never be a safe or profitable sire of a harness horse is not only deduced from my own experience but from the fact that you have bred the thoroughbred horse for 150 years or more with the view of producing one thing: speed in the gallop. Now you don't want speed in the gallop, you don't want the gallop at all for a harness horse. If a thoroughbred horse has action you don't like him, you say he gallops "round," he does not get over the ground, therefore your whole movement with regard to the thoroughbred has been to breed action out of him, and action being essentially the property of profitable harness horses and action being essentially absent from the thoroughbred, that is the reason why I say you cannot in the long run breed harness horses, profitable harness horses, from the thoroughbred. Now the thoroughbred man answers that the endurance of the thoroughbred is of great value to the harness horses. I reply to that. The endurance of the Hackney, which has the hereditary property of action, is sufficient for all practical purposes to which the harness horse is put, and to that I would like to add that while I admit frankly the courage of the thoroughbred, in my opinion, the two-year old training of race-horses and short races have resulted in reducing that courage, so to speak, for the purpose I am speaking of, simply to an exhibition of the greatest possible nervous or muscular energy in a very short space of time and over a very short distance. If by practice, which would have made it hereditary, the thoroughbred had been trained to distribute his nervous energy over a longer space of time and a longer distance it would have assumed the form more of what the French call *resistance*, and would have been more valuable than it is now for the purpose of harness horses. If that be so, that the effect of racing has been to aim at producing great speed for a comparatively short distance it would be equally fair to say that the effect of the aim of the Hackney breeder is to produce action in an excessive degree and for a short distance possibly. I think that both peculiarities might be modified when you come to cross the two together with mutual benefit, that is to say that if you want to get a harness horse that will go a very long distance at a great speed, for two generations I would train the Hackney to speed and distance and so modify the height of his action. If you wanted to cross with the Hackney a thoroughbred that would improve him and produce great endurance and speed I would train two or three generations of thoroughbreds to very long distance races.

10661. To revert for a moment to the questions I asked you, may I assume that if it was desirable to breed more extensively for harness purposes in Ireland and from Hackney sires, it would be necessary in order to be successful that it should be done somewhat on the same scale and manner as it has been in England, that is to say you would require a certain number of the best Hackney horses and also Hackney mares?—I think not ; that would be simply breeding the pure Hackney, that would be simply lifting the Hackney breed into Ireland, and you would still have to start your process whenever you crossed him out on to the hunter stock. My remarks have been directed to the value of the Hackney in crossing. I have very carefully kept out of the solid Hackney except in one or two cases I quote.

10662. May I take it from you that you think that if anything should be done by the Government towards encouraging horse-breeding in Ireland, that in the districts proved to be specially suitable for producing hunters they ought to put a certain amount of suitable thoroughbred stallions at the same price as Hackney stallions; and that in the districts which at present have been assisted by the Government and the Congested Districts Board you think that a certain number of suitable thoroughbred stallions should stand alongside of a larger number of Hackney stallions and that in view of the general interest of the industry in Ireland the farmer can be trusted to discriminate and choose which sire he would send his mare to?—I think in the long run a farmer could be trusted, and

my principle would be to give a certain amount of choice to the breeder, but give the preference to the stallion which by common consent was suited to the stock of the particular locality, in the form of putting down, as I say, in the pure hunter-breeding districts, six hunter stallions to one Hackney, and *vice versa* in other districts where hunters could not be produced. I believe as a sire upon a promiscuous undersized light-boned type a good Hackney is a very valuable sire indeed.

10663. You think he would produce a saleable animal?—I think he would produce a saleable harness horse.

10664. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Talking of the race-horse, you say it has been for a number of years bred for speed alone. You do attach I understand great emphasis to the high courage which racing has engendered in the breed?—Yes.

10665. I mean for the purpose of crossing?—Yes, I qualified the form in which the courage appeared by saying that the courage which had been there through long generations of training has more recently been contracted, so to speak, into the shape of a sudden effort over a short distance, a great effort of nervous or muscular energy for a short distance, but for crossing purposes it would have been far better if it had been distributed into the form of endurance.

10666. Do you think you can contract high courage into a limited space of time, if a horse is courageous for five minutes I presume he is courageous all his life?—No, I don't think that I agree with you. I think you can have a horse that could win a short race and could not win a long race; you can have a man that could scull a short race and could not scull a long race, and you can have a man who could run a short race and could not run a long race; although the fundamental principle of courage exists in each it has not been developed in the same form in both.

10667. It has not been trained, but still the high courage exists there?—The high courage exists, but my whole theory with regard to horse-breeding is that a habit constantly trained and developed in successive generations can be made to become hereditary, and that the animal can be made prepotential with regard to the property implied by that habit.

10668. Don't you think that perhaps you are confusing courage and endurance in what you say?—I think that endurance depends upon courage. I don't think myself you can have endurance without courage; but you can have courage, *i.e.*, the property which enables a horse to win a short race, without endurance. I think that endurance is a prolonged and distributed development of courage.

10669. A nice distinction?—I don't know.

10670. Apart from that, before we adjourned we were speaking about the breed of horses in Yorkshire, especially in the east of Yorkshire. I think you said that you looked upon the best carriage horses as animals of a size from 15 to 15·3?—I said that putting aside the barouche horse, which is an animal of 16 or 16·1, that the range of animal from 15 to 15·3 contained all the highest-priced harness horses.

10671. Putting aside the larger horses?—Yes.

10672. In the East Riding of Yorkshire some years ago there were a large number of those barouche horses bred?—Yes, quite so.

10673. We have heard in evidence that to a great extent they are not bred there now?—Yes.

10674. And that is the result of the large breeding of Hackneys that goes on in that part of the country?—Do you wish to ask me if that is so? I think simply it is the result of the natural operation of the market, that the Hackney has produced a higher-priced horse, and people who used to turn their attention to breeding the coach-horse, as they are peculiarly called—that means, of course, the barouche horse—have stopped breeding them, because they saw their neighbours getting very high prices for the Hackneys.

10675. That also in the East Riding applies to the hunter, which used to be largely bred there?—Yes, I believe it does.

10676. And is now practically extinct?—Very little bred.

10677. And you think that the produce that is bred there now is, and is likely to remain, as valuable as the older breeds, that is the larger carriage-horse, the big brown carriage-horse that we used to see in the country, and the weight-carrying hunter?—Oh, yes; I should think the Hackneys would be always very valuable.

10678. More valuable?—Very much more. May I explain that I think the system of jobbing has had a good deal to do with it. The class of horses you are speaking of is called in Yorkshire coachers. I am not speaking of the coach horse that is driven in a team; it was more an animal of the class of your barouche horse.

10679. But the coach horse is the barouche horse?—Well, yes; it is something more, the highest type of the barouche horse, if you get it with action, I think, in the trade. If I were to show you half a dozen, which I could at my stud, of pure-bred coach horses, you would call them at once barouche horses in the trade. But I was going to say that the growth of the system of jobbing has led to the decadence of coach horse breeding. As a general thing that was the type of horse that the job-master bought, and the breeder did not find the prices that he gave sufficiently tempting to induce him to continue breeding horses when he saw alongside him those high-stepping Hackneys of rather a smaller size, which also suited the gradually lightening of the build of carriages which fetched high prices for private use. He did not feel tempted to go on breeding coach horses because he simply had the job-master as a customer, and not the private buyer. I think that has operated very strongly against the breeding of the coach horse. It must also be remembered what I think I said before when the Chairman asked me about the history of the Hackney that the roadster or Yorkshire Hackney was a horse in his best specimens of 15·2½, and even 15·3, therefore he had size.

10680. CHAIRMAN.—Do you happen to know the height of the three stallions you mentioned?—These were at the beginning of the century, and I should imagine that they were not more than 15 hands, I think, or 15.1. There is a famous description of one of the horses I mentioned—Marshland Shales—in one of those old books. I believe that in Yorkshire a great deal of thoroughbred blood was taken in at first—big blood horses, with, perhaps, a certain amount of action; and the height of some of the famous horses of the generation preceding that which we know was greater than the four teaching Hackney sires of recent days. When I first paid attention to Hackneys there were four great horses—one in Norfolk—"Confidence"; the others were in Yorkshire: they were Triffitt's "Fireaway," "Lord Derby," and "Denmark." None of these horses were 15.2. "Sir Charles" (the sire of "Denmark"), Taylor's "Performer" (the sire of "Sir Charles"), "Achilles" (the sire of "Fireaway"), Ramsden's "Phenomenon"—a much earlier horse—and others I could mention were 15.2½ or 15.3. With regard to the original formation of the stud-book, it is only some fourteen years old, but since its existence of course it has been extremely valuable. At its foundation it could not be relied upon as an absolute authentic statement of pedigrees—as, for instance, the general thoroughbred stud-book could be relied upon at that time—but the information and the pedigrees in it were collected with great care from authentic sources, particularly from stallion cards (I should think that they were the real foundation of the book part of the stud-book); and also from the local knowledge which I have already stated was very carefully kept by the older breeders; there had been during the whole of the century an oral stud-book, so to speak; but to pretend that the

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Hackney stud-book has anything like the authority of the general stud-book would, of course, be absurd.

10681. Then, no mares were introduced into it as what you may call inspected mares?—That was a system on which I am hardly qualified to speak, because I was its greatest opponent and carried on a very bitter fight against the practice of inspection, and by the help of the Yorkshiremen who came up—old men who had never been to London in their lives—we completely beat the inspectionists, and inspection ceased to be a back-door entrance into the stud-book. What I felt was this—those old farmers who had bred those horses in Yorkshire and the Eastern Counties deserved great credit for having stuck to the breed and kept it more or less pure; that it was upon their horses that the stud-book was founded; and that there was attached to entry or registry in the stud-book a very great value in other countries—they attached more value to it than I think it really possessed. Then there came along a class of people—a number of people—who said, "Oh! but we have horses that look like Hackneys, and we think because they look like Hackneys they ought to be admitted to the stud-book," and of course that would have been to greatly water the capital of the old Hackney breeders, and it was bitterly opposed by myself and Lord Londesborough. Its great advocate was a member of this Commission who is not here to-day, whom I expected to see here. We won the day, and that utterly irrational system of inspection has never been exercised again. There were, I admit, during the period when it obtained—I think two years—a great number of mares admitted to the stud-book by inspection which never had the slightest business to be there; they remained in the stud-book and have been bred from, and by the operation of the rules of the society it is possible to raise an animal starting from an inspected mare to a so-called pure Hackney—a full-registered Hackney; therefore, while I think—I don't want to be misunderstood about this—the movement with regard to stud-books has been of enormous value to the breeders of these horses, and that the value of the animal is increasing every year that the stud-book lasts, at the same time I should be very sorry to say that because an animal is in the stud-book it is a good Hackney or a safe Hackney to breed from.

10682. There is one other thing quite apart from that, you mentioned before we adjourned, which was as to long distances. You say that long distances now-a-days are not required on account of the railways?—I did say so.

10683. That is the case in England I grant, but looking at the few railways that there are in Ireland, and the long distances that hack cars, for instance, have to travel, and often do travel, on business, do you think that quite applies as much to Ireland as it does to England?—My whole argument was that the Hackney did not do long distances because he was not asked to, but you could train him with the greatest ease to do long distances.

10684. I thought you said they were not required?—Yes, but that does not imply that they cannot do it.

10685. No, I was not suggesting that, but the long distances you will allow in Ireland are still required?—Oh, yes, and could be performed by the Hackney.

10686. Lord RATHDONNELL.—There is a question I would like to ask you in reference to Hackneys. Do you take action into consideration before the conformation of the animal itself?—I should say that action is the very first thing. I must add this remark, that the action of the Hackney, and the conformation of the Hackney, which fashion and the market prove to be the best combination for harness, seem to go together. One associates the Hackney type with fine action.

10687. With regard to action, do you look very carefully, when you breed, to the shoulders of the Hackney?—I have stated myself that I have paid great attention to shoulders and quality. I think that they are extremely valuable, both for the harness horse and the riding horse. I think they are valuable for the harness horse, because I think good shoulders mean less banging of the forelegs, mean easier action in front, and my definition of good action in the Hackney is that the knee should be raised as high as you like, the higher the better, but the shoulder should carry it there and the foot follow out. Then you get elegant action, that sort of action if you drive the horse slow produces a beautiful effect, because he poises his foot for a moment before putting it down. I place a high value indeed on shoulder action in the Hackney.

10688. I believe it is rather hard to tell shoulder action unless you get on the back of the animal. In a saddle horse, of course, you can test the shoulder action to a certain extent. How can you test it in the harness horse?—By the eye, and as an element in the whole of the front action. I think you can see pretty well when you see a horse run whether his shoulder is really working on its pivot. A great many Hackneys have, I won't say bad shoulders, but the point of the shoulder is fixed, so to speak, they don't raise it enough; they raise the knee without working the shoulders, and that produces the pumping action, which is a very bad feature to my mind. But I think the most beautiful action you can have in a horse is that of the Hackney with good shoulder action.

10689. As a rule do you think they have good shoulders, taking the whole of the Hackney breed of horses?—If you ask me whether they have good riding shoulders I should say no. I should say that very often, more often than not, their shoulders are very well placed. But I make a very great difference between a well placed shoulder and a riding shoulder. For riding the shoulder of the Hackney would probably be too thick on the top and perhaps a little too loaded at the point; but the place of the *brachia* in relation to the *humerus* is good in the Hackney.

10690. Some people judge shoulders pretty much by the height of the withers, do you think withers have anything to say to the shoulders?—Yes, I confess I do, I may be ignorant, but I am very fond of a good wither.

10691. High wither?—Not an abnormally high wither for the Hackney, because that would make him awkward to look at, but I very much dislike a horse that is flat on the wither.

10692. Do you find in Hackneys a tendency to be light of the forearm?—I should say not, not as a characteristic.

10693. Do you think that as a rule they stand well on their knees or back?—Admirably, they stand on their knees. There is a certain breed of horses, the most fashionable and, from a market point of view, one of the most profitable breeds in the Eastern Counties that had a peculiarity, they were not exactly back of their knees, I distinguish between that and having bone cut away a little underneath the horse. These horses had the bone cut away a little but it never interfered with their work. I should say Hackneys stand very well on their knees, perhaps it is one of their strongest points. There is one famous family of Hackneys which you would say is back of their knees and another famous family that stands over on their knees, but they only represent two strains of the whole Hackney blood.

10694. Do you think as a rule they have strong second thighs?—Their thighs run down well into their hocks. I should say they are splendidly breeched horses, I should not like a specimen that had not got good second thighs, I should not say they were weak in that respect, certainly not.

10695. I think you said with regard to horse-breeding in Ireland that you would give the farmers a choice of stallions, that is a choice of the Hackney

and thoroughbred, and in the long run the farmers would find out whether they were breeding right or wrong, now is there not a certain amount of experimental breeding in that?—Undoubtedly, there would be.

10696. Take some time before they found out whether they were going right or wrong?—Yes.

10697. With regard to the formation of the Hackney Stud book, did not a certain gentleman furnish a great deal of the information?—I believe that there was an editor of an old paper, or he had something to do with an old paper, and he had a great deal of the records; but I am bound to say that there was a great deal of local, and accurate, and reliable knowledge brought to bear in the formation of the stud book, it was not perfect, it was impossible under the conditions that it could be perfect, but those who are in the know or could speak, and are familiar with the district where each particular Hackney was bred, know exactly how to discriminate and how to value the appearance of the horse in the stud book.

10698. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—I should like to ask you, you suggested just now that you did not think that the Hackney had a riding shoulder or was a riding horse?—I very carefully guarded that, that was a personal opinion of my own, and I very carefully guarded it by saying that many good riding horses were produced by the breed. But as a type I admitted I do not think the Hackney is a riding horse myself, simply because I am a hunting man and always like to ride a horse with thoroughbred blood.

10699. Quite so, but what I wanted to arrive at was whether you think the Hackney produces a useful and pleasant riding horse crossed with the ordinary type of mare they have in Ireland?—Yes; I should say the nearer to a hunter with quality the mare, the better the riding properties of the produce would be, better than the true Hackney; if you put a true hunter stallion to an Irish hunter mare with quality you get a better riding horse than you would if you put the Hackney stallion to the Hackney mare.

10700. Quite so, but would you get as good a riding horse if you put that same mare to the thoroughbred horse?—No; not from a pure riding point of view; if you wanted weight-carrying power and substance you may improve it in that respect by putting it to the Hackney.

10701. One point that has been rather pressed on us is the action of the Hackney; you do not require that action in the riding horse?—You do not.

10702. And if you had the extreme action of the Hackney it really physically would almost necessitate waste of power and possibly of endurance?—No; I directed a great many of my remarks to that point. I don't think it would; to put it briefly, I think if you have a Hackney with big action and ride him for a long distance the only effect is his knee comes down; he does not raise it so high.

10703. Do you think the cross of the Hackney with the breed of mare they usually have in Ireland would produce a weighty draught horse that would be useful for artillery and cavalry purposes with the heavy artillery they require at present?—I have no doubt they would produce that, but I should be very sorry to encourage any effort directed to producing those horses. My cardinal proposition has been that to make horse-breeding pay you must aim at breeding the highest type of any particular class, and to suggest a principle, or to trouble yourself over a system which would produce horses for the army is simply ruining the breeder; that is my opinion.

10704. But a great deal of the horse interest of Ireland is concentrated in the trooper class, not for the British army, but for various other Governments, and a great outlet for the farmer is the animal that does not quite come up to the standard that he hopes for, and if the Hackney type was introduced into that, do you think that the produce of that would be equal to the present produce of the thoroughbred and the ordinary mare of the country as it is now?—That question was also put to me by Lord Dunraven, and I answered it, and I can answer it again by saying that I think there would be very little difference in the price of the two. I might say that the improvement of the military horse has been one of the great objects which foreign Governments in procuring Hackney stallions have set before themselves. As I said before, in Italy I found 260 Hackney stallions.

10705. CHAIRMAN.—Belonging to the Government?—Belonging to the Government, yes. They had introduced those horses partly because they felt it would improve the profits of the breeder, but they would not have introduced that class of horse unless they had been governed by the object of producing good horses for the army. Now, what they have found is that these Hackneys do produce from all sorts of mares very valuable horses for the artillery; they produce more substance than they have got there, but for their light cavalry—to tell you all I know on the subject—for their light cavalry they are going back to Sardinia and other parts of Italy where the Arab has been a great deal used.

10706. But don't you think that as far as the riding horse of Ireland is concerned for military purposes—I am only touching on military purposes—it would be difficult to get a sufficiently powerful artillery horse from the Hackney and the mare of the country?—I think he would give you a better artillery horse than the thoroughbred horse.

10707. Ah, granted. I am not thinking of that. I say for artillery purposes. You say they breed in the North of Ireland a different type to what they breed in the South, and they get a heavier horse in the North; but he is not got from the Hackney blood as a rule?—What is he got from?

10708. The Shire horse and Yorkshire coach horse in the North; the riding horse comes from the South, and I think we may fairly say that the riding horse almost necessitates the use of the thoroughbred horse?—Yes.

10709. The question is whether it would be advisable to introduce a different strain of blood into the present breed of horses as useful to the different Governments for their riding purposes and the service?—That may be the question of a gentleman who is interested in the matter from a military point of view; but, from a breeder's point of view, I should say that the introduction of the big Hackney in such a case would enable the breeder to produce as good artillery horses, and would give him the chance of constantly producing a high-stepping harness horse with substance.

10710. Do you think there would be a sufficient outlet for these horses that don't quite come up to the standard of high prices?—I think they would have the same outlet for military purposes as the horse you are describing.

10711. Put the two classes distinct—the riding horse and the draught horse. I am touching now on the riding horse to breed cavalry horses, for which there is a great outlet. Of the animals that do not come up to the breeder's expectation the outlet for them is in the different Governments as riding horses for troopers, and for car and cab horses in London. Supposing you were to introduce another strain of blood which deteriorated the qualities of the riding horse and the light driving horse, which is so well known, do you think that there would be an outlet for a nondescript animal, that is, neither one thing or the other?—If you introduce a class of horse that deteriorates the quality I suppose the outlet would be somewhat narrowed; but I don't know exactly what class of horse you suggest has deteriorated the quality.

10712. The riding horse requires a certain shoulder?—Yes; but it requires a great many other things.

10713. That is a very great necessity?—Of course it is a great necessity.

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10714. You say you are a hunting man. You would not get on to an animal wide in his shoulders and moving with that knee action, would you?—No; but I thought you were talking about the misfits which hunting men don't ride—horses which were going into cabs.

10715. The misfits go into the different Governments?—Your artillery man is not so particular.

10716. I am speaking of the cavalry entirely?—I have seen a great many horses in the cavalry that had not very good shoulders and more in the artillery. My point is this, that for the cavalry you must have a certain substance with bone, and you ought to have short legs, and so on; and if you have got all those things—although I should prefer the horse with perfect shoulders, and as a great many Hackneys have good shoulders there is no reason at all why the use of the Hackney stallion should necessitate bad shoulders—you have done well.

10717. But you think the Hackney stallion has a better back and loin than the good thoroughbred horse?—For weight-carrying I should think by far.

10718. Do you think he is a better boned horse than the thoroughbred?—He is very much shorter between his joints.

10719. His cannon may be a little shorter as a rule?—I think he has good bone.

10720. If he does not measure as much round he has not good bone?—This I will say, that many horses with the bone possessed by thoroughbred stallions, of which you see hundreds serving in England and Ireland, would be absolutely rejected as Hackney stallions.

10721. I quite agree with you, but I am speaking of the high-class thoroughbred, if you can get him, and the high-class Hackney?—But I don't admit that the high-class thoroughbred necessarily has good bone. My argument has been with regard to the thoroughbred that he has been bred for one thing, speed in the gallop.

10722. That is correct, but if you take the high-class horse that you would breed from to get the hunter type do you get a thoroughbred with as much bone as any animal in the world?—I don't think you get him with more bone than the Hackney.

10723. Not more bone, but if you can get the thoroughbred bone is it as good or better bone?—Of its quality it is better bone, because it is denser in substance, but it is a long way between the joints, and puts the horse a long way up in the air, and the body is shelly.

10724. CHAIRMAN.—As regards the bone itself, if the horses were equal the thoroughbred bone would be better?—Yes; and then next comes the Hackney, then the cart-horse. The most porous bone of course is that of the German coach-horse.

10725. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You spoke of the beautiful action of the Hackney, can you have more beautiful action than that of the thoroughbred horse who moves?—Oh! I think so.

10726. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—The best thoroughbred?—Yes; for driving purposes.

10727. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—For any purpose?—Ah! but wait. I must have a definition of this action. When I speak of action I mean what is commonly called knee action, that is action which shows so well in harness. If you ask me about riding action, can you have better riding action than in the thoroughbred? I should say not.

10728. Do you prefer knee action to that beautiful action of the thoroughbred who moves and bends his knee?—You very rarely see it. If you see it it is accidental.

10729. I have seen it very often?—I should be very glad to see a thoroughbred stallion who can get it, whereas every Hackney stallion can get his action.

10730. You say a light shoulder gives light action, and prevents the horse from hammering his legs?—I did not quite say that. I said that a horse with good shoulder action, that prevented him hammering his legs; but the thoroughbred, while he hardly puts his feet on the ground, does not raise his knee.

10731. Oh! he does?—Well, it is a question of experience. I have given my experience.

10732. But not in the same extravagant manner, I mean?—If we are talking about profit to the breeder. I have given my manager *carte blanche* to buy horses with the finest action, and the result has been that out of the 179 horses sold at my three sales only ten were by thoroughbreds, and whereas the general average was £185, the average of the horses by thoroughbreds was £109. Now that is a direct appeal to the market, which I believe after all is one of the safest guides ultimately.

10733. Quite so, if you can breed that class of horse, but can the poor Irish farmer who has a very indifferent mare, can he improve that breed by putting an indifferent, well, I don't like to say that, putting a less high strain of blood than the thoroughbred to it?—For what purpose, hunting.

10734. To get rid of in the market?—There is no question about it that the introduction of the Hackney into any district in Ireland would enable a man to breed horses he can get rid of in the market. I have answered the question about the introduction of the Hackney into the hunter districts with a great deal of reserve.

10735. Mr. CAREW.—Your main reason for recommending the introduction of the Hackney blood is to improve the breed of harness horses in Ireland?—Yes.

10736. That is that the produce would become saleable harness animals?—Yes.

10737. Don't you think it would be a dangerous experiment to limit the breed to the particular type when in Ireland now they successfully breed from the thoroughbred several different types, they get the hunter, they get the harness, and they get the trooper?—I am all against limitation, and I consider that confining sires to the thoroughbred is a greater limitation than adding to thoroughbred sires a Hackney sire.

10738. Your contention is that the Hackney will produce only a harness animal?—I never contended that, I think the Hackney might produce extremely valuable mares which, if you put them to thoroughbred sires, would produce better hunters than the original mares would.

10739. You spoke of the introduction of Hackneys into Italy, are you aware the Italian Government buys remounts largely in Ireland?—Oh, yes, certainly.

10740. That has been given in evidence before the Commission?—Oh, I know that very well, the fact remains that when they wanted—they are great horse loving people—and when they wanted to improve their native stock they bought, as I have said, gradually, 260 Hackney stallions, and they predominate enormously over any thoroughbred stallions.

10741. When was this introduction made?—They were there and serving two years ago, and I should think they have been introduced gradually from the time of King Victor Emanuel, he was extremely fond of English horses, he introduced a certain amount of Hackneys at the same time. Victor Emanuel and the present king have bought their own riding horses in Ireland. The present King of Italy has the finest stud of weight-carrying hunters that has ever existed in the world, you could see nothing like it in the country. He does not hunt, but he has bought the first prize weight-carrying hunters at the Dublin Show or Royal, and so on, for riding horses. They would probably recognise that Ireland was a capital place to get them from, but when it comes to improving their native breed they do not introduce the thoroughbred stallion but the Hackney stallion, and such information as I have, and such experience as I have gained in travelling abroad, which is not very extensive, but I have gone thoroughly into the horses of the countries where I have been, is that whereas the hunting foreigner will always come to Ireland to

buy his hunters, he will never take part in any effort to improve hunter-breeding in his own country.

10742. CHAIRMAN.—They don't hunt, do they?—Why then do they buy hunters?

10743. They hunt here?—I beg your pardon, an immense number of hunters are taken abroad.

10744. Lord ASHTOWN.—Riding horses would be the name?—Well, they call them hunters, they hunt in Austria, and France, and in Italy to a certain extent.

10745. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know that all the troopers in Ireland now are chiefly bought by dealers, the breeder does not get the trooper price at all, there is a profit between him and the army?—I believe that is the case.

10746. I don't know whether you have read in the Press any of the evidence that has been given before us?—No, I have not. I should have been very glad to have read it, but I could not get it, and I have been extremely busy, otherwise I could perhaps give more useful rebutting evidence

10747. You don't know that the people who are credited with producing the best hunters hardly form 1 per cent. of the population, have you got these statistics at all?—No, I don't exactly know what that would mean.

Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I should like to know how Mr. Wrench arrives at these statistics?

CHAIRMAN.—I don't think Mr. Burdett-Coutts can be in a position to answer that question.

Witness.—I am extremely anxious to give all the information to the Commission that I can.

10748. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think, from what you have said to Lord Dunraven, that Ireland is specially adapted to produce every kind of horse?—I should think so.

10749. And do you think that the trade in harness horses or the trade in hunters is the most certain to the breeder?—I have already pointed out that there is far less risk to the breeder of the harness horse than there is in the hunter. The buyer of the harness horse has to take all the risk of breaking him, and making him, and keeping him sound during the most critical part of his existence. Whereas—I am not sure of the practice in Ireland, so I speak with diffidence—but certainly in England, the man who breeds a hunter as a rule has to make him, ride him, and show him as a hunter, and possibly give a trial of him as a hunter before he can make a profitable price of him.

10750. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—May I ask when you are comparing the two whether "hunter" applies to the riding horse and not exclusively to the made hunter?

10751. Mr. WRENCH.—I am talking of hunters alone?—I should also like to say, as bearing on that question, that I do think it is a matter for somewhat grave consideration whether you are wise in confining or doing anything to confine the horse-breeding of the country to the production of the hunter, because while the demand, as I have already pointed out, for the harness horse is absolutely certain and permanent and must always exist, the demand for hunters depends upon conditions which have already once or twice been seriously interfered with, and which may hereafter be interfered with again, and it is possible that hunting might be either stopped or greatly diminished in England. Then you would have committed your country—you would have confined your country—to a class of horse, the hunter, which if hunting disappeared it would be extremely difficult to make a profit out of.

10752. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—What about the motor cars?—I don't mind them.

10753. Mr. WRENCH.—You are not alarmed about the motor cars?—I am not, and I certainly hope that hunting will never be interfered with, but at the same time the hunter is a more perilous basis for trade than the harness horse.

10754. Do you know that there is a good demand for harness horses in England at present, is that demand at all supplied by foreigners now?—Five years ago a veterinary surgeon of the greatest experience in London told me that of the horses over 15·3 in London dealers' stables, eighty per cent. came from abroad. He had great experience and great knowledge of foreign horses and of the English trade with foreign countries, and I should be inclined to believe that was the case.

10755. Do you know anything about the American trade, whether many horses come over from America?—I don't know from personal knowledge very much about it. I think you might find someone who knew a great deal more. I have seen notices in the papers, and so on, which are common property, about large shipments of horses coming over.

10756. I wanted to ascertain if you thought there was any trade which the foreigners have now that Ireland could get hold of in the way of producing harness horses?—I think there is a very large trade that Ireland could get hold of, granting I am right in what would be the result of crossing a good Hackney stallion on a good-shaped hunter mare of size, say sixteen hands. I think that probably the result would be to produce a harness horse which would be bigger than the Hackney, and therefore able to compete with the great mass of foreign carriage horses, which now come over here. I am not distinctly advising it, because I always reserve the question of the effect of the Hackney upon a pure hunter district, but that would be the result, I have no doubt, that we should produce a class of horse which is now supplied to a great extent by foreigners.

10756A. We have had it suggested to us several times that all the horses that come in from America, especially from America, but all the horses that come in from abroad, should be branded or marked in some way to distinguish them as foreign horses, do you think that would be a practical movement?—I think it would be extremely unpopular with the dealers.

10757. As far as the breeders are concerned what effect would it have on them?—I have no doubt they would like it, at the same time it may work both ways, if these horses were very good horses, and they had a brand, everybody might look for that brand.

10758. Then it is not one of the remedies you would suggest?—No. In Italy they are practically buying these stallions for the last twenty-five or thirty years.

10759. To breed cavalry horses?—Yes, I should say that was their main object, at the same time they give very high prices, and for some of the very best horses they did not care what they gave.

10760. CHAIRMAN.—I should like to ask you, to make me understand a little more clearly, if you can, about what you call the middle of the harness market. That is in Ireland the trade which lies between the two extremes, the horse used in the Irish car, and the superior carriage horse or hunter. You say, which may be true, that there is very little market for all that lies between these extremes?—No, that most of the market lies between the extremes.

10761. And there is no great demand for that, no great sale at a fair price. I understood you to say that although there is a demand and consequently a certain price for the animal that will do for the car-driver and so on, and of course a demand for the hunters and high-class carriage horses, yet that betwixt and between there is not any demand?—I am afraid I must have explained myself badly if you have got that impression. My two extremes were extremes of type or size, namely, the little car horse, which would not go above 15 hands, and the big horse, which I have called the barouche or job horse, with respect to which you have had evidence. Those are two types produced in Ireland by the use of the thoroughbred, I say that the whole of the horses which lie between those two are the most valuable portion by far of the harness trade.

10762. Do you mean that they are actually or ought to be?—Oh, no, that they are. They are not

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produced in Ireland, there are none, they don't exist, that was my whole argument. I mentioned a case where I sent a third-class horse in that middle range who won eight first-class prizes.

10763. That is vacant?—That is vacant in Ireland and within that lie by far the most valuable harness horses.

10764. There are large possibilities you think within that range?—Very large.

10765. And those possibilities might be filled by the introduction of suitable sires, which you think are the Hackney sires?—Undoubtedly.

10766. What I would like to get from you is why you think so, and in that direction, what grounds have you got for so thinking, that the putting, say, of good Hackney sires to this heterogeneous and very valueless mass of mares that exists on the confines of the congested districts for instance, what reason have you to think that their produce could in any way compete with the animal that at present in England fills up the gap in Ireland, that middle class which does not exist in Ireland, how could we compete with England?—You will remember that I gave an explanation that a fixed breed would be pre-potential and predominant over a mixed and promiscuous breed, and that the Hackney is a fixed breed, that he has his characteristics, which are valuable to him, as a harness horse, by heredity, and when he is crossed with a promiscuous mare, the result would have more of the characteristics of the fixed breed than of the promiscuous breed, so I think in Ireland you would gradually—perhaps not by the first cross—but you would gradually work up to the production of a horse which would lie within the range I have described as the great middle range.

10767. That range being pretty well filled in England?—I don't think it is, I think there is plenty of room within that range for other horses. I think the price of those horses is very high, I am very glad it is.

10768. But putting the matter practically and taking this class of animal that you describe as lying inland of the congested districts, this mixed class of animal that could be improved by the introduction of the Hackney stallion, how many generations do you think it would take before you could produce an animal that could fairly compete in the open market with the animal which already exists and is being produced in England and by what means?—It would be difficult for me to say how long. I don't think anybody could say in how many crosses, and I have never suggested that out of that frightfully inferior stock, which I describe as being located in these special districts, you could breed the highest type of horse, but I think you could breed a far more valuable horse than they do now, and possibly in cases that might work up to a fine harness horse. I may say myself—as I do say when I come to the question of these specific crosses—that in two generations I have worked up most beautiful horses from a small pony by the use of the Hackney stallion.

10769. Now, as regards the riding horse, the circumstances are rather different because for the middle animals, not good enough to make a hunter and perhaps not good enough for a high class carriage horse, there is a demand for them as troopers?—Yes.

10770. Assuming there was a certain amount of public money available, in which way do you think it could be more profitably expended, in endeavouring to improve the riding horse or in endeavouring to produce in Ireland, which does not exist at all at present, what you term the middle between the Irish car horse and the few high class carriage horses, the middle of the harness class?—I think for the profit of the breeder it would be better to introduce the Hackney.

10771. For the profit of the industry generally?—Yes, guarded by the conditions which I have already stated.

10772. I think you said the profitable nature of breeding high class Hackneys depends a good deal upon the demand for horses with showy action?—Yes, undoubtedly.

10773. In your opinion is that likely to be a constant demand?—I should think, looking at the course of the last 3,000 years, it is bound to be, because you see action is as old as the first representation of the horse; in the old sculptures and friezes you will see the horse with his knee up, and every picture you see of a horse in the days when they wanted to make a horse attractive he is always shown with action. The love of action has been greatly on the increase within my memory and I think it is likely to remain so, because I think in the Hackney we are improving the class of action and getting away from the objectionable character of up and down, pumping action, which I never liked and never would have.

10774. Is the demand for a high class Hackney with superior action a large demand or comparatively limited?—I cannot exactly say—I know it is greater than the supply.

10775. That may be, but perhaps the supply is not very great—I mean you must look upon this matter with which we are dealing. The breeding of horses in Ireland is a very important industry, infinitely more important than as compared with other industries. I want to know whether you consider the supply of hunters is an important factor as connected with horse-breeding in Ireland?—I think it is immensely important, and the greater importance of the place that horse-breeding holds in Ireland in the economy of agriculture, the greater the importance of increasing the strings to the breeder's bow by enabling him to breed all the kinds of horses he can.

10776. There is a good deal in reputation, the name for producing a good article?—I don't think you can get the name without producing a good article.

10777. Ireland having the name for producing a good hunter that has a certain commercial value?—Yes, the good will is very important.

10778. And anything that proved detrimental to the production of the animal would tell against the country as a horse-producing country?—Yes; I think it would be very unfortunate to deteriorate or interfere with the production of hunters in Ireland. I believe it is possible to largely increase the scope of horse-breeding without interfering with the production of hunters in Ireland.

10779. And you, I gather, attach no importance to the bicycle and tricycle, and motor cars, as affecting the horse industry?—I do not in reference to the high class expensive horses, but the ordinary animal that the middle classes in England used to drive about. All our cars and busses will be driven by motor cars; they are all horsed from abroad now, so I shall not be sorry for the action of the motor car; it will no doubt interfere with a good many light draught horses I should think.

10780. You mean driving horses?—I mean van horses that take vans with parcels.

10781. Don't you think it may become common for a man that keeps a horse and gig to get two or three bicycles for himself and his daughter instead?—Oh, I don't think so. I will tell you exactly what bicycles did interfere with. They interfered with high class park hacks, because the people who rode high class park hacks took to bicycles; it was the fashionable thing to do, and the Row was deserted—I found that at my last sale. That is all changed now. Then, I think as a rule, the great body of people who now ride bicycles did not formerly ride horses; the people who form the great mass of customers for the bicycle are people who will give up a trip at the seaside for a year in order to get a bicycle; they never kept a horse at all.

10782. You spoke of the Italian government buying Hackney stallions; have other governments bought them largely?—Oh, yes; Austria has bought them very largely, France has bought them largely,

and Germany has bought—I am not sure to what extent.

10783. Do you know of your own knowledge what class of mares they have been put to?—They have been put all round the country, on the principle of the foreign *haras*, to give people a choice. A government stud will consist of five or six different varieties of horse, so as to enable the farmer to attune his breeding operations according to the interests of his market, his own use, or his mare.

10784. Have you any knowledge of what the result has been?—I believe myself that we see the result very largely in those horses that are now coming over to us.

10785. The harness horses?—Yes, an improved type of horse.

10786. As a matter of fact, do those foreign governments buy as many cavalry remounts as ever they did?—That I don't know.

10787. I presume the governments did not buy these Hackneys solely with a view of benefiting farmers?—I think the foreign governments always have at the back of their heads some idea about their military purposes.

10788. I think you have not told us about your experiments in crossing?—Of course these questions have brought out a good deal of what I wanted to say generally on the subject of crossing. I desire to make one or two explicit reservations with regard to the Hackney stallion used for crossing on other breeds. You should be certain that his blood is old, for you cannot always tell from the Stud Book—you can tell it from local knowledge—and that it comes of a line in which his characteristics—that is to say, those which you wish to reproduce—have been constantly repeated. That is the first thing, pedigree; the second is quality. It is essential that he should have quality. The Hackney has greatly improved in late years in this respect, and an enormous amount of harm has been done to the reputation of the Hackney by a certain class which was pushed in the trade when the breed first came into prominence, the horse with "stocky" shapes, short neck, and carty quarters. You might see at the first Hackney show the type of horse that was shown, and won prizes the first two years, did a great injury, and I think reflected great discredit upon the Hackney breed. Yorkshire horses were hardly shown. Then the Yorkshire horse came to be shown, and the Yorkshire type was fixed more or less as the type which won the prices. And then the Eastern Counties worked up to that type and produced a horse which they thought near to it. Size—he must have size. It is a mistake to suppose that Hackneys are necessarily little horses, 15.1 or 15.2 hands. I have already spoken about the size of these older horses, the generation before last. I have devoted myself with some success to raising the size in the pure breed; but it can only be done by the most careful selection and the most systematic and patient crossing. I make this reservation with regard to size for the general purposes of horse-breeding. Of course you may have, as in the case of the Congested Districts, small mares which it would be foolish to put to big horses. My conclusion with regard to the Hackney stallion as a getter of saleable harness stock from half-bred mares is that—given good pedigree, good quality, and good size, the Hackney is infinitely more valuable for that purpose than the thoroughbred stallion—that is from half-bred mares. Well, now, I will just give you some rather interesting specific instances of crossing in my own stud. I already gave, at the beginning of this pamphlet, an analysis of the crosses, and I now deal with them particularly. When I first began horse-breeding I began as other people breed. I bought four mares, more or less hunter mares, two of them I knew were hunter mares, and I chose them for their looks as fine brood mares, for their depth and bone and shoulders, and so on; they were mares that any judge of a horse would say were fine brood mares. I put them to thoroughbred stallions, and the result was so disappointing that I put them to Hackneys and gave up breeding from a thoroughbred stallion. I had a very beautiful thoroughbred stallion, a horse that had every requisite that a weight-carrying hunter can have, a horse called "Truefit." He got a good many very fine hunters, but he never got weight carriers. I used him a few times; then, as I explained before, there came in the demand for pure breeds, people came to my stud and wanted pure breeds, and I rather gave up crossing and stuck to the pure breeds. I have now rather begun it again, because I have a sufficient number of each pure breed. I will begin first with the Hackney and thoroughbred stallions on half-bred mares, that is mares of unknown breeding and without what I have called action. I did not know the breeding of the mares. I take a mare, one of the grandest hunters any man ever rode. I rode her five years in Leicestershire. She could jump anything and gallop as long as hounds could run, and was up to weight. I put her twice to a thoroughbred. The first foal I sold at six years old for £23. This mare was not put to "Truefit." The second I sold for £9. She did not breed for three years, but last year had a foal to a Hackney which is worth at least double what I got for the two horses by thoroughbreds; it was a very fine foal.

10789. What horse did you put her to?—The two thoroughbred horses. One was a horse which I think I would rather not mention, because he is living now, the other was a horse called "Lord Malden," who was serving. He was a very good looking horse; his fee was five guineas. The other horse's fee was a good deal more.

10790. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—A first foal out of an old mare would not be likely to be a very good one in any case?—Here I had two foals—the first sold for £23 and the second for £9.

10791. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What age were they when you sold them?—They were full age. Of course they were not successful horses. I don't want to lay too much stress on these instances I am giving, it is only inductive logic, but I promised to place all the information I could at the disposal of the Commission. Here is another hunter mare, breeding unknown; she was made to harness and driven. I put her to a thoroughbred, I think that was "Truefit." Her colt was sold at five years of age for £28. The same mare was put to a Hackney, the colt was a good harness horse, but he had a bad blemish, and sold as a four-year-old at Tattersalls for £50. Now, I take a big brown mare, 16 hands, still in my stud, which I bought at Tattersalls, breeding unstated, in a hunter lot from Ireland. She is a fair type of an Irish hunter, but without the best of shoulders and no action. I don't mean that Irish hunters have not good shoulders, but I mean that this one did not happen to have the best of shoulders. I first bred from her by a Hackney, a fine, great harness horse, upstanding, and with plenty of action and big bone, which was sold as a four-year-old for £175. Her next foal, also by a Hackney, was a big horse with equally good action and a rare worker. He was sold as a six-year-old, after two years hard work, for £125. Then she was put to "Truefit," and the foal was a good-looking mare—I have got her now—without the substance of a hunter and without the action of a harness horse. I should say I could not get more than £50 for her. Since then the old mare has been put to Hackneys continuously, and there is a three-year-old mare out of her by a "Fireaway" stallion which is one of the best in my stud. I take a rather smaller mare bought on the same day at Tattersalls, with rather better shoulders, breeding unknown. I found out by subsequent inquiry that she was a hunter, and a very good one. I bred her to a Hackney, and the foal was a very fine harness horse, 15.3; sold for £185. The mare stopped breeding and I sold her. I take a very big mare, something between a hunter and a harness horse, 16 1, big frame and fair action.

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I put her to Hackney stallions, and she has bred me two of the finest mares in my stud—great slashing mares with big bone, roomy frames, and very fine action. I should imagine that if you were to see these mares, you would say they would breed fine hunters to thoroughbred stallions. Now I take the thoroughbred and the Hackney on the Irish hunter mare of known breeding. This was an Irish mare, which I rode in Leicestershire, by "The Fenian," her dam by "M.D." She was a very beautiful hunter, rather under my weight. I put her to a good thoroughbred, still living, whose name I will not therefore mention, whose fee was £25. And I chose a thoroughbred with good bone. She bred a miserable horse, which was sold as a four-year-old for £15. That was her first foal, and there is that legitimate objection. I then put her to my own Hackney stallion, "Candidate," and she bred me a beautiful mare, 15.2, with good shapes, clean bone, and fair action—a perfect type of a park hack. I put this mare that was by the Hackney out of the nearly thoroughbred hunter again to a Hackney stallion, and she has bred me a very fine horse, with more action than the dam, and with all the original quality of the grand-dam. This is a case where we start with a hunter mare with quality, of which many are to be found in Ireland, and breed to the second generation with a Hackney stallion with successful results. Now, I take a cross, which is perhaps not so very pertinent to this inquiry. It is that of the Hackney stallion on the thoroughbred mare. I take three thoroughbred mares first:—"Arminella," a mare by Massinissa out of Fenella by Chevalier d'Industrie out of Jeu des Mots (dam of Empress, winner of the Grand National in 1880), by King Tom. Arminella is a typical steeplechase mare up to fourteen stone. She won the Open Hunters' race at Kempton Park. I have put her to my Hackney stallion Sir Peter, and she has produced a charming filly, deep, with plenty of quality and fine action. "May," a much lighter thoroughbred mare by Struan out of Rosebud by Ellerton out of Contraction by Emilius. She bred me in the first instance a filly to a horse whose fee was fifty guineas, which was sold for thirty guineas. To Truefit she bred a pony, of which I will speak afterwards. Again, to another thoroughbred she bred a gelding of no value. To a Hackney stallion she bred me a beautiful mare, which is entered in the Hackney Stud Book; a perfect park hack, with the shapes and quality of a thoroughbred, and a great deal more action, easy and from the shoulder. You will remember you asked me about the action that Hackneys would get out of mares with quality. This last mare I put again to a big Hackney stallion, and she has bred me a really magnificent mare with great size, long sloping-back shoulders, big flat bone, and high swinging action, calculated I should think to make one of the finest brood mares in my stud. With regard to the pony above mentioned by the thoroughbred stallion out of the thoroughbred mare, I put her to a Hackney pony stallion, and she has bred me a charming stepping pony with great quality. The third thoroughbred mare that I take is "Start," bred in America by Glenelg. She was second in 1878 in the Cesarewitch to "Jester," and third in the Newmarket Jockey Club Cup to "Silvio" and "Insulaire." She was one of the finest types of a big thoroughbred mare I ever saw, with great size and depth, clean flat bone, and a certain amount of action. She bred to a horse whose fee was a hundred guineas a thoroughbred foal which was sold as a yearling for 35 guineas. For five years afterwards she either was barren or slipped or her foal died, to thoroughbred stallions. I then put her to one of my Hackney stallions. She bred me a fine foal, now a yearling, somewhat too light of bone for my purpose, but with fine action in both the trot and gallop. The mare herself had very good bone; the Hackney of course had, but the thoroughbred blood throws back to some lighter bone in spite of her own and the Hackney's excellence in that respect. I may say generally speaking that the bone is an enormous difficulty in dealing with the thoroughbred blood, whether pure or whether seven-eighths or whatever it may be. I would have crossed the thoroughbred with the Hackney over and over again, years ago, if every time I tried it it had not diminished the bone and lengthened the leg. That is my general experience of crossing with the thoroughbred. There are three instances, which are perhaps hardly to the point, of the Hackney stallion on harness mares with action but of unknown breeding, they have bred some very valuable animals indeed. I don't know the breeding of these mares, but they have got action. There is now a case which I particularly want to call your attention to, the Hackney stallion on the pony mare with quality. This was a beautiful mare; she is dead now, but if you saw her I think you would say she was a mare, that it was not impossible to find the type of—although you might not find anything quite so handsome as her—in Ireland. You could either call her a pony mare or a very small thoroughbred mare, her breeding was quite unknown to me, she had great quality, rather light of bone and very little action. I put her always to Hackneys. She bred me a stallion, which after serving for a year at my stud was sold for 600 guineas. That was in the days of the Hackney boom, at the same time he was a wonderfully valuable horse, he served for a year at my stud. This stallion had great quality and action. I put him to a strong Yorkshire mare, a Hackney, a Fireaway mare with the oldest and purest Hackney blood I could get, and he bred me a far better stallion than himself, which again has bred some beautiful stepping horses with great quality. This mare is of a type not unfrequently to be seen in Ireland. Whether you could call her a pony with quality or a small thoroughbred, she is an admirable instance of the value of the Hackney cross upon small mares with quality. During the last eight years from 200 to 300 mares have been sent annually to my Hackney stallions.

10792. CHAIRMAN.—Hackney mares?—My stud is located outside the recognised Hackney districts, and roughly speaking, 80 per cent. of the mares sent to my Hackney stallion have been non-Hackney mares, hunters, harness mares, hacks, &c., old favourites of people that live about London. Year after year I have seen their foals at my stud by my own stallions, and these have comprised a great number of beautiful and valuable animals with good size and quality, and action running through them as the predominant feature. Most of the dams have been devoid of action. There is only one more thing with regard to crossing. I should like to call the attention of the Commission, and I will explain why, to the cross of the Hackney stallion and the coaching mare; the mare Mr. Fitzwilliam was mentioning. In my breeding operations I have looked about for some method of supplying the demand for harness horses of 16 hands, more or less with fine shapes and action; a demand now very largely supplied to the dealers by harness horses from abroad. I find the pure Hackney as a rule not big enough to supply in any numbers this type of horse from ordinary-sized mares; the coach horse, except in the case of my own horse Sultan, has not sufficient action. In this class of horse you have to compete with the French coach horse (*carrossier*) that has a good deal of action and fair shapes, and the German coach horse which has shocking bad shapes, soft bone, bad feet, no action behind, but who "flops" it up in front. Again, the buyers of this class of horse, which is chiefly used in the landau, are very often people who do not know anything about horses, and their eye is taken by this action in front. I believed from the first that the best cross to produce the required type was the Hackney stallion on the coaching mare, and I have used that cross with great success. The produce have, as I have stated above, more size than the Hackney, and more action

than the coach horse. They have just that extra length of shapes and quality which are necessary when you raise a Hackney to 16 hands, to prevent him being a vulgar harness horse. Now I call the attention of the Commission to this cross, because the coach horse is nearer the big harness horses now bred in Ireland from the thoroughbred stallion than any other breed or type, except hunters, in England. Moreover, they are used for the same purpose, and supply a finer type for that purpose, their lines being more uniform and elegant, and their action better for harness work. They are the true English "barouche" horses, and an old and beautiful breed. Formerly, as I have already stated, the great London jobmasters got most of their horses from this breed in Yorkshire. Their custom could not have been profitable to the breeders, and the class of horses they bought could not stand alongside of the Hackney, with his higher action and his greater money value. Consequently coach horse breeding dwindled. They were originally produced by crossing big thoroughbred stallions on Cleveland mares. That is the origin of the Yorkshire coach horse, and the thoroughbred blood was often taken in again and again. I do not wish to represent them as hunters, but I could show the Commission half-a-dozen of these mares, with respect to which I think any judge of hunter-breeding would say "Put that mare to a quick, short-legged hunter stallion with fine laid-back shoulders, and she would breed a fine hunter." I put her to the Hackney, and she breeds me a fine harness horse. The parallel to which I have pointed is not absolutely close; but I feel sure it is a sufficient guide to enable one to predicate that many of the Irish hunter mares would breed very good harness horses to the Hackney stallion. That is all I want to say about crossing, the relation between the breeding from the Hackney stallion and the breeding from the coaching mare which I have found extremely successful, could, in my opinion, be carried into Ireland with perhaps not such admirable effect, but with very good effect in the production of 16 hands harness horses.

10793. You spoke just now about the quality of the Hackneys having been much improved of late, how, by what means?—The only means by which I have been able to improve it has been by careful selection.

10794. Among Hackneys?—Among Hackneys entirely.

10795. I have a vague idea of what quality means as regards a thoroughbred horse, but I am not sure what it means as regards a Hackney?—It is a somewhat subtle property residing in the neck and head, and quarters.

10796. And produced by careful selection?—Produced by careful selection. Undoubtedly my principle has been with regard to the produce that you are bound to stick to the breed in order to form a finished stud, and the closer you stick to the breed, the more you will be able to predicate the result of crossing in other breeds.

10797. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Have you ever seen any of the stallions that were purchased by the Congested Districts Board in Ireland?—Between the letter which I wrote and my tour three months elapsed, and when I was coming back from my tour I saw, I think, seven or eight stallions which had been purchased.

10798. Do you know the names of any of them?—I don't know that I could quite remember their names now, but I know there were some very nice horses amongst them, and there were one or two, I think, very bad horses—only one bad horse. I have a list of them, and made very careful notes on them.

10799. Generally you approved of the horses?—Of those I saw.

10800. Did you find many of them calf-kneed—in at the knees, back of the knees?—I don't remember finding a calf-kneed horse—no, I don't remember. There was one bad horse—I think he had every fault almost that he could have

10801. A horse standing that way would naturally be standing more on his back tendons than if he were properly formed at the knees?—Yes, I think he would. I don't know quite whether you mean "calf-kneed," or simply the bone cut in under the knee, which is sometimes loosely called "back of the knees"; I have seen a lot of good working horses made like that, but I don't like it—it is an eye-sore. I think it is far less objectionable than a calf kneed horse, a horse whose knee is really bad. The horse I mean does not stand back of his knees; he puts his feet in relation to the knee, and the knee in relation to the shoulder, as if he had good bone, but there is, so to speak, a little of the bone scooped out in front—it is a great eye-sore, and I always try to avoid it. There was one famous strain, perhaps more than one, amongst the Hackneys of which that was a characteristic.

10802. Did you notice that at all in the Congested Districts Board's horses?—I don't remember that I did. If I turn to my notes I should find out, because it is a thing I am always on the look out for; I have had it in my own stud.

10803. Do you object to a horse having long pasterns and standing back on them?—Personally I am rather fond of long pasterns, that is, I would rather have a pastern too long than too short.

10804. You would rather stand back on the pastern than have them straight?—A great deal, you mean having the pasterns too sloping, rather than having them too upright. I would rather have them too sloping. I hate upright pasterns, particularly for riding.

10805. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know whether there was a great trade in these coach-horses in America at one time?—Well, there has been a great trade in everything in America, they are the most extraordinary people for rushing at a breed, almost senselessly, then they get very bad specimens of that breed and get sick of it. There was at one time a very considerable export of these coach-horses.

10806. But since that great export to America, there has not been much trade in coach-horses in America?—I think not.

10807. Why were they given up?—Because only jobmasters bought them, the use of that class of horses has gone so enormously into the hands of the jobmasters, and out of the hands of private persons. A great proportion of the people in London that have only a landau and brougham, job their horses, and they are the jobmasters' horses essentially.

10808. You have been about Yorkshire a great deal?—Yes.

10809. And has not horse-breeding there been of great use to the farmers, have not lots of the farmers made a great deal of money by it?—Yes; I have already stated there are no counties in England in my experience where horse-breeding has been anything like the profit to the breeder that it has been to the Hackney breeders of Yorkshire and the Eastern Counties.

10810. And they are a fairly intelligent lot of men?—Very much so, particularly the Yorkshire men, sharp as a needle.

10811. And they would not take up the Hackney breeding unless it paid them?—No.

10812. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—With reference to the Yorkshire Hackney breeders, are they the same people who bred the Short-horns in Yorkshire some years ago?—Oh, I should think not.

10813. The same cow that fetched £1,000 twenty years ago is now sold for £20, we might draw an analogy about the Hackney?—Yes; and as there was a sudden boom in the Hackney breed so there has been a great drop from that boom down to more normal prices. That boom lasted—and I think I was responsible for it to a great extent—it lasted for three or four years, and brought a tremendous lot of money into the Eastern Counties and Yorkshire, and I think it did some harm to the breed. I think it gave people the idea that if they bred anything they could get it

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into the Stud Book and always sell. But I knew that sort of thing would level itself down in the end, and it was for that reason I turned my attention to the harness department of my stud, because I felt I must have an outlet for my horses, an outlet depending on the normal course of trade. And therefore when I speak on this subject, I speak not only as a breeder but as a person who has had to face the market. I have certain advantages, of course.

10814. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Don't you think the "boom" was accountable in a great measure for the large way in which the men of the East Riding of Yorkshire suddenly went in for Hackneys?—I think a great many more men went in for Hackneys, but the Hackney had always been located in the districts about Hull and Driffield.

10815. Yes, but to a comparatively limited extent?—No doubt, there has been an increase in Hackney breeding.

10816. A very large increase?—A very large increase.

10817. And don't you think the boom in Hackneys a few years ago was greatly accountable for that?—I suppose it was, when the demand increases of course the supply will increase.

10818. Do you know that a great number of farmers in that district would be very glad to get back again, if they could now, to hunter-breeding?—I did not know that.

10819. That is what they tell me, I live in the middle of the district?—I think, as I say, that the boom did this harm, it gave people the idea that no matter what Hackneys they bred, good or bad, they could always sell them, and they did go in rather foolishly, but as a staple industry in that district, I think the old roadsters always remained.

10820. CHAIRMAN.—Is there anything else you would like to tell the Commission?—There is nothing else I have to say myself, unless I may submit my suggestion with regard to hunter-breeding in Ireland. It applies to the points in which I believe that constant and successive use of the thoroughbred deteriorates hunter stock. There are to be found in Ireland weight-carrying hunters, with every property essential to the term—size, substance, good shoulders, short legs, big clean flat bone, quality, pace, and staying power, sound all over, and with hard open feet. Some of these are seven-eighths bred, and from true hunter stock known for generations in the country. Some are even nearer the thoroughbred. These horses have resisted for generations the deteriorating operation of the thoroughbred cross with regard to substance, while they have retained those properties necessary to the hunter which the thoroughbred alone possesses. This shows that they must have a strong force of prepotency with respect to the properties also essential to the hunter which the thoroughbred does not possess, and which you want to ingrain into hunter stock. Keep some of these horses as stallions. Make sure before you use them that they like jumping and have pace and endurance. That will enable you also to decide if they are sound in the wind, and free from any other transmissible weakness. Take this cross in wherever or whenever the native stock becomes light and weedy, and while keeping to the true hunter you will greatly improve his type. This, of course, would have to be the work either of a public-spirited individual or of a system aided by Government. Had I been a hunter-breeder I should have adopted this method twelve years ago, when I suggested it, and should have patiently worked it out. Like the other theories which I put forward with regard to the breeding of harness horses and have carried out in practice with successful results, this one, I believe, would have attained its object. That is my suggestion, and I believe it is better than the introduction of the Hackney stallion, better infinitely than the constant, successive, sole use of the thoroughbred stallion, and a suggestion which if carried out would cause a great improvement in the breed of weight-carrying hunters. Now there is only one other thing I want to say, that is, I, myself, consider—although I have talked a great deal and written a great deal on these subjects—I myself consider one ounce of experience worth twenty tons of theory, and one minute of sight-seeing worth a week of talking, and if it would be within your scope, and would be possible for you to see my stud, I would endeavour to arrange for a view of it with the special object of illustrating such of these crosses and questions as have arisen in the course of my evidence as remain in my stud. I may state that it is divided into three parts, many of the horses which would illustrate these points are away in Yorkshire, and if you did like to see the horses I should so arrange the show that it would be useful to illustrate the evidence.

CHAIRMAN.—It is very kind of you to suggest that.

The Commission adjourned to next day.

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TWENTY-FIRST DAY.—THURSDAY, MARCH 4TH, 1897.

Sitting at 12, Hanover Square, London, W.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P., in the Chair; LORD ASHTOWN, MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, K.G., HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM, LORD RATHDONNELL, SIR WALTER GILBEY, COLONEL ST. QUINTIN, Mr. PERCY LA TOUCHE, Mr. F. S. WRENCH.

Mr HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

General Sir John Watson, V.C., K.C.B.

General Sir JOHN WATSON, V.C., K.C.B., examined.

10803. CHAIRMAN.—What position do you hold under the Government, Sir John?—My duties are to purchase stallions in England, and send them out to the Indian studs.

10804. And how long have you been engaged in doing that?—Four years.

10805. Could you tell the Commission what class of stallions you send out?—I send out stallions such as are indented for by the Indian Government, sometimes thoroughbreds, Hackneys in different proportions, occasionally half-breds.

10806. What do you mean by half-breds?—It is difficult to know what the Indian Government means by half-breds, but if I meet with a stallion, not a pure Hackney, not a pure thoroughbred, but who has no trace of cart blood in his pedigree, that is what I take to be a half-bred horse indented for by the Indian Government, and send him accordingly, but very few are asked for.

10807. That is a cross between the thoroughbred and the pure-bred Hackney?—Either that or a horse bred by a thoroughbred out of a mare that is not in the thoroughbred Stud Book.

10808. And you send it?—In the proportions asked for annually by the Indian Government.

10809. Could you tell us what proportion of

thoroughbreds, half-breds and pure-bred horses, Hackneys or other breeds, you send out?—In the last four years I have sent out 132 stallions, sixty of these were thoroughbred, sixty-five Hackneys, and seven half-bred.

10810. Are you limited to price?—I am limited to 350 guineas, but if I see a horse of a higher price that I think worth buying, I have to make special application to the Secretary of State for India, which is usually granted.

10811. And what are the principal objects of the Government establishment in India?—The Government of India maintains 360 to 370 what are called Imperial stallions scattered over the country, and any owner of a mare who can get it branded by the Civil Veterinary Department as fit to produce a remount can obtain the services of that Imperial stallion free. The local governments also maintain what are called District Board stallions, but they are usually small Arabs for breeding ponies and small animals.

10812. Then as far as the Imperial stallions are concerned, am I right in supposing that the main object is to secure a sufficient supply of suitable animals for remounts?—Entirely, the only object is remounts for the army.

10813. And for that purpose both thoroughbred, pure-bred Hackneys, and half-bred stallions have been tried?—Yes, Arabs are also used, and a few thoroughbred Australian horses have been used lately.

10814 I suppose the class of mare varies a good deal in different parts of India?—Very much indeed.

10815. Are those different classes of stallions placed in localities where it is supposed they would particularly suit the class of mare?—They are distributed by the Inspector-General of the Civil Veterinary Department to such districts as he thinks best, with regard to the class of mare in the district.

10816. Can you tell the Commission at all where the Hackney stallions are placed, and the kind of mares they are put to?—No, because they are moved about at the discretion of the Stud officers.

10817. Have you formed any opinion as to whether the produce of the Hackney stallion with the native mares has been successful and proved useful as remounts?—I think the produce of the Hackney stallion has been very successful.

10818. And how about the thoroughbreds?—When I was in India last winter I endeavoured to come to a decision as to which class of sire was the most useful, but I was unable to give the preference to either one or the other. The produce of the Hackney appeared to me to be quite as good as the produce of the thoroughbred, but I had complaints from many cavalry officers that the legs and bone of the Hackney-got remount was not as lasting, although it was larger than the bone and leg of the thoroughbred produce, but still that evidence was not very decisive, and I came home with the conviction that there was no credit to be given to the one above the other, and that the one was quite as useful as the other, employed by the stud officers in the districts where they were most wanted.

10819. You think the produce of the Hackney is equal to the produce of the thoroughbred in endurance and stamina?—I could not answer that question, because it can only be decided on a campaign, and the practice camps that we have in India are not sufficient test for a point of endurance.

10820. Can you tell us when Hackneys were first introduced into India; how long have they been there?—Certainly for the last twenty-six years, and I think a few were sent thirty-five years ago.

10821. Then there has been plenty of opportunity of seeing the result?—Yes.

10822. What is your opinion about that?—My opinion is that the introduction of the Hackney stallion upon the Indian mare has been attended with great advantage.

10823. Improved the mares, the race in fact?—I should not say that it had permanently improved the Indian mare, but the produce of the Indian mare, and the remounts from the Indian mare by the Hackney stallion are very good looking.

10824. Do you think that the introduction of any European blood at all is calculated to improve generally the Indian horse?—My opinion is that it does not create any permanent improvement.

10825. How have you formed that opinion?—That is my private opinion only. I don't think I am supported much in that view.

10826. You would think that well-selected native stallions would be as useful as imported stallions for Government purposes. I mean remounts, and so on?—I think that if pure-bred mares were maintained in India, that either the thoroughbred or the Hackney stallion would produce from them the best remounts, but that they would not permanently improve that race of Indian mares, and I hold that to be successful in our breeding of remounts in India we require mares of the pure and ancient Indian races, many of which there are in India now.

10827. Are the owners of such animals careful in preserving their pedigrees?—No; few of them have written pedigrees, but they have traditions.

10828. I gather from you that the qualification necessary for free service of the Imperial stallion is a certificate that the mare is suitable to produce remounts?—V.I. is branded on her shoulder if she is approved of by the stud officers as a mare fit to breed a remount, likely to breed a remount.

10829. And is that all that is done by the Government in the way of encouraging good mares?—Yes; that is all, with the exception of prizes given at horse shows. Horse shows are held all over the country, and prizes are distributed to mares and produce.

10830. Has that been found to answer well?—Yes, undoubtedly.

10831. Lord LONDONDERRY.—You have seen, I suppose, the second cross of those Hackneys put to Indian mares. Have you ever seen the produce of this again?—The third cross?

10832. Yes?—I may or may not have seen them, but I have no record of having seen them.

10833. I think you said that you thought there was no permanent improvement by means of crossing the Hackneys with the Indian mares. Does that mean that you think that the third cross would not be so advantageous as crossing that with a different class of horse?—I apply that idea to all English blood, whether Hackney or thoroughbred exactly the same.

10834. CHAIRMAN.—Australian also?—Exactly the same. There is no difference in that point We have used thoroughbred stallions for 100 years, and I think they have left no permanent trace of improvement in India. The Hackneys we have used for twenty-five or thirty years. I don't think they have left any permanent improvement in the breeds of India. The best and handsomest remounts I saw in India last year were the produce of Hackney stallions out of mares whose sires were Arabs.

10835. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Are they small mares, or what size are those mares by imported Arabs?—Between 14.2 and 15 hands, as a general rule.

10836. And what is the height required for remounts, what is the smallest you take?—For European troops, 15 hands the minimum; for native cavalry, 14.2.

10837. And I suppose a great many animals are bred considerably smaller than that that are no use to you for remounts?—Yes, there are many animals under 14.2, and as I was saying just now the District Boards maintain 160 stallions, and their produce from small mares is not much more than 14 hands

10838. Is there a market for that class of animal or what becomes of them?—There is a constant market.

10839. Do they fetch anything like remunerative prices?—Oh, they fetch very good prices. The prices of all the horses in India have much increased in the last 20 years.

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10840. And you attribute that to the importation of these Hackney and thoroughbred horses?—I can hardly say that, because we have imported thoroughbred stallions for 100 years, but the price of horses has only risen for the last 20 years.

10841. Of course you see a good many Hackneys in England when you are making your selection before you send over?—Yes.

10842. Do you see a great deal of difference between them, some very good ones and some very bad ones, that you came across personally or do the dealers submit to you a certain stamp of horse that they know you will buy?—There are good and bad of course, but I see a very great number, a very much larger proportion of good Hackney stallions than I see of good thoroughbred stallions, that is to say, I could easier select 20 or 30 good Hackney stallions than I could select ten good thoroughbred stallions, much easier.

10843. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—At the price you are allowed?—Yes.

10844. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Which would you think—if you were limited to one or the other, either Hackney or thoroughbred—would breed the best class of horse for your purpose in India, if you were limited to one or the other?—I never expected to be limited, and therefore I have never considered the question.

10845. You think the results are equally good from both, you have no fault to find with either?—Used in districts to which they are most suited, I think they are equally good.

10846. You have not, I suppose, seen any of these rough mares, and pony mares in the congested districts?—No, I have not seen them.

10847. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—I suppose from the number of years that the Hackney has been in India that there are now a certain number of generations existing there half-bred?—Oh, yes.

10848. But I gather that you think that the second and third and fourth generations have not improved, that there is no great improvement?—I think there is no great improvement in the breed of Indian horses permanently made either by the Hackney or the thoroughbred.

10849. Then should you like in breeding to go back with these half-bred mares to the Indian horse as a stallion?—No, I should like to breed pure bred mares, pure Indian mares of pure breeds, and breed remounts from them by English horses.

10850. Then what you prefer is the first cross?—The first cross.

10851. Pure Indian mares and pure English stallions?—Yes, for remounts, first cross.

10852. What size of Hackney do you prefer for India?—From 15 to 15.1.

10853. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you mentioned Arabs and Hackneys and thoroughbreds as being stallions chiefly used in India; is there not another, the Waler?—There are a few. I believe that Veterinary-Colonel Hallen is coming here. He is provided with all the statistics as to the numbers of horses in India, in their proportions.

10854. Have you ever seen any of the Walers?—Yes, I have. I saw ten last year, Australian stallions with thoroughbred English pedigrees, that is to say descended from thoroughbred horses imported into Australia.

10855. Is that what you call the Waler?—That is what they call the Waler.

10856. How do they compare with other stallions?—The English thoroughbred stallion?

10857. Yes, and the Hackneys?—You cannot compare them with the Hackney, but comparing them with the English thoroughbred they have larger bone and better feet, the Australian descended of the English thoroughbred has much better bone and much better feet.

10858. Did you see any of the produce of these Walers?—No.

10859. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Are those Walers that you allude to pure thoroughbred on both sides, sire and dam from English stock?—Yes.

10860. But the Waler that is known in India for remounts, he is not pure bred, is he?—No.

10861. The horse commonly termed the Waler is not a thoroughbred horse?—No, he is a horse bred on the great runs of Australia from any sort of mare, but they are all descendants of English horses.

10862. But not from the registered thoroughbred horse?—There is an enormous mixture of them.

10863. It is rather important in the evidence that you should define the difference between the Walers that are known as Walers in India, and those that you are alluding to when you said they were the produce of the thoroughbred horse. I want to know are the sire and dam thoroughbred?—Yes, those imported to India for stallions are. The question I think was regarding Waler stallions, the Government have lately imported a few from Australia, thoroughbred Australian stallions with as pure pedigree as any thoroughbred horse in this country; the pedigree is maintained in Australia in their stud book, there is an Australian Stud Book.

10864. It is necessary that the horses that are bred there should be for endurance in India in case they should be wanted for an emergency, for war, therefore you have had no experience as to how these different crosses with the native mare from different stallions turn out?—Yes, as I have said, we have been breeding for one hundred years, and in many of our Indian wars, the stud-bred horse, as they call him, has been well tested. There has been diversity of opinion as to their endurance, but I think the evidence prevails that the Australian horse does not surpass the stud-bred horse in endurance. You will find one commanding officer of a regiment say: "Give me the Australian Waler," and another say, "Give me the stud-breds," but there has been no distinct and decided prevalence of opinion in favour of one over the other.

10865. There have been reports published every year from India on the result of the breeding in the various districts, I think you said Mr. Hallen would produce them, it would be very useful that we should be furnished with these reports?—The annual report of the Civil Veterinary Department of India gives all the statistics every year, most minute particulars. Mr. Hallen, no doubt, will have the book with him.

10866. Colonel Sir QUINTIN.—Are you able, Sir John, to get the number of thoroughbreds, as a rule, that are indented for by the Indian Government?—Hitherto I have, but I have never been asked for more than twenty; I think that if I was asked for more than twenty I should have great difficulty in procuring them. When Lord Mayo was Viceroy of India he took a great interest in the studs, and he said he was perfectly certain that ten thoroughbred stallions, suitable to the Indian studs, could not be found in one year in England and Ireland. I think I might find twenty but not more, because the perfection of bone, and limb, and hoof, which is required for the Indian studs is very rarely found among the thoroughbreds at the present day, except in large horses and very expensive horses.

10867. Were you in favour, from what you saw of the Australian horse, when you were out there last, I mean, of the Australian stallion?—I saw eight or ten very good ones.

10868. They were all of thoroughbred English blood?—Yes.

10869. Speaking of endurance and the test of endurance, did you ever hear that, according to the statistics of the Afghan War and of the Boundary Commission, where they had every class of horse, the stud-bred, the Barb, the Waler, and the Arab, that they came to the conclusion that it was the age more than the breed of the horses that determined how they stood the hardships?—I have not heard that.

10870. That the horse between six and ten stood it best?—I have not heard that.

10871. Mr. WRENCH.—Before you had the appointment of buying stallions for the Indian Government, had you previous experience of India?—Yes; I have, as a cavalry officer, been always very much interested in the breeding studs of India all my life.

10872. And were you many years in India?—Thirty-eight.

10873. So you had great opportunities of seeing all the studs of native horses there?—Yes.

10874. To what do you attribute the reversion of all the horses to the native type in India?—I won't say that they revert to the native type, but my belief is—a belief which I am not supported in by many people—my belief is that the cross between the European blood and the Asiatic blood always deteriorates in the third and fourth generation. I conclude that this is the reason why, although we have been breeding from English horses for a hundred years, yet we have (as far as I can see) hitherto made no permanent improvement in the Indian horses.

10875. Were you recently in India inspecting studs?—Yes, last winter.

10876. Did you inspect many of the studs there, and many of the stations where the Government stallions are located?—Yes; a good number of them, and attended several fairs.

10877. At the fairs do they give prizes, or are the fairs markets for sale?—Very considerable prizes are given, and sales are also effected.

10878. Can you say what horses won most of the prizes, or if you were able to distinguish whether one breed more than another won prizes?—No, but Veterinary-Colonel Hallen can give you the exact statistics of the prizes won by each class of horse.

10879. Did you make any experiment to try whether you could test the appearance, whether you could tell what stallions the different horses were got by?—I did try once, in company with the Inspector-General of Remounts. We ordered the depôt officer to take out ten four-year-old remounts bred by Hackneys, ten by thoroughbreds, and ten by Arabs, and mix them all together, and then we went to the stud and selected what we thought the ten best remounts, and then sent for their pedigrees, and I think five were by Hackneys, four by Arabs, and one by a thoroughbred; but I should not consider that a very reliable test, though I think it is quite sufficient proof that the Hackney used in the proper districts gets quite as good remounts as the thoroughbred. That test showed, of course, a great superiority, but I don't think it is a test you can rely upon altogether, because we had no record of the mares that they came from.

10880. In purchasing stallions, you have tried to purchase what you term half-bred stallions?—Yes.

10881. Have you looked at many of these half-bred stallions, or is it hard to find them?—I never found one that I cared to send out to India, but because they were asked for I have sent out three or four.

10882. But you have looked at a great number?—No, I don't find a great number.

10883. They don't exist, as far as you are aware?—I don't think they exist; I never find them. Occasionally I have sent out five stallions bred by a thoroughbred out of Hackney mares; I don't think that they were as good as the pure Hackney or the pure thoroughbred.

10884. Do you know at all what the result has been?—No, I don't; they have not been there long enough.

10885. In the course of buying horses have you been over most of the Hackney studs in England?—Been over a great many, not all; it would be a long job.

10886. Have you seen the horses belonging to the Congested Districts Board in Ireland, the stallions?—I have.

10887. Did you form any opinion of them generally?—I thought they were a wonderfully good class.

10888. You looked over them carefully?—Yes.

10889. CHAIRMAN.—I suppose, Sir John, in buying these Hackney stallions you would be guided in your choice as to shape and action and so on by the knowledge that they were intended to get horses suitable for riding?—Certainly. I always select, if I can, a Hackney stallion that looks likely to produce a riding horse, rather than a driving horse.

10890. And I take it that your general opinion is that from natural reasons the Western horse, the European horse, produces no permanent effect upon the native breed in India, but I gather as you did not mention it in the same category that the other Eastern horses would. Has the Arab produced any permanent effect?—I am not sure whether he has or not.

10891. And you consider the most suitable animal for remount purposes is the first cross between the native mare and the pure-bred or nearly pure-bred English horse, whether thoroughbred or Hackney?—If the mare is herself pure-bred.

10892. In granting free services in this way to branded mares do the Government retain any right over the produce of the mare?—No.

10893. None whatever?—None; the only restriction is that remount officers are not to buy branded mares, otherwise there is no restriction.

10894. Do the Government keep any mares of their own to breed from?—No, they used to, but they have entirely given it up.

10895. Since when?—Colonel Hallen can mention the exact date when stud breeding was given up.

10896. All that the Government does is to provide these Imperial and district stallions?—That is all.

10897. Do they travel the country?—No, they have fixed stands, and the remount officers attend the fairs, buy the young ones, and turn them out in large runs until they are four year old, when they take them up and stable them and mount them, and make them fit for the army.

10898. What is the price they give for remounts?—For young ones?

10899. What age do they generally buy them?—At eighteen months.

10900. That would not tell us very much—but what price do they give then?—Between 300 or 400 rupees, I think, according to the value of the animal.

10901. Do they buy any three or four year olds?—No, the cavalry officers buy the three and four year olds.

10902. What is their price?—About 300 rupees.

10903. I don't know, Sir John, whether you have formed any opinion or can give us any opinion on the subject of the most suitable animal for remounts at home, in England and Ireland, whether the cross with the Hackney is likely to be useful or not?—No; other people know more about that than I do.

10904. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do I understand you to say that in the case of breeding you would like to put an English stallion to a pure-bred Indian mare?—For the purpose of producing a remount, not for continuing the breed.

10905. But to a half-bred mare you would prefer to put to an Arab. I thought you had said that. I was not quite sure. I thought you had said that to Lord Londonderry in answer to a question?—No, I don't think I said that. I said that the best remounts I saw were bred by Hackney stallions out of mares sired by Arabs.

10906. CHAIRMAN.—Is there any other information you would like to give us?—I think not; if my opinion upon any general subject was asked I might, but not otherwise.

10907. I don't know whether you have formed any definite opinion as to the fitness of the Hackney sire for getting an animal suited for harness purposes. I mean at home in this country?—I have no doubt he is a particularly fit animal to do so, and I think he is a very fit animal to get riding horses too, and I think you can get ten sound and useful Hackney stallions to one sound and useful thoroughbred stallion at the same price, of course.

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Mr. Clement Stephenson, F.R.C.V.S.

Mr. CLEMENT STEPHENSON, F.R.C.V.S., Newcastle-on-Tyne, examined.

10908. CHAIRMAN. — You live at Newcastle-on-Tyne?—I do.

10909. Where you practice as a Veterinary Surgeon?—I do. I am not in general practice now. I gave up general practice in October, 1880. I only do work of a special kind now. Consultations and examinations and cattle inspection work. I am Chief Inspector for Northumberland and also for the city of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

10910. And you know that part of the country pretty well?—Yes; pretty well; I do.

10911. I mean pretty well as regards horses?—Yes.

10912. Are there many horses bred in that part of the country?—No, sir, it is not a great breeding country; it is a large manufacturing district.

10913. Have you got any opinion as to the general character of the mares that are bred from there?—We have not a good class of brood mares, that is the great trouble and the great cause of all the disappointment in breeding, the want of good brood mares. I refer there to the ordinary farmer who just has a non-pedigreed mare, and breeds from a half-bred cart mare or a little harness mare.

10914. Are you speaking of the country generally?—Generally, it refers to the whole of the Kingdom, I believe that.

10915. Has not the Duke of Portland a scheme for the breeding of half-bred horses?—He has.

10916. Do you know anything about that?—Yes, I took a little interest in it. I was at the Duke's show at Welbeck last summer, and I was also at Bothal, near Morpeth, shows that he gets up at which he gives prizes for the benefit of the tenantry. They have to show horses that are sired by the Duke's horses. The Duke finds the very best sires. And at the luncheon at Welbeck he said that the great trouble was the want of good mares and to remedy that he bought a Yorkshire Hackney stallion with a view of the fillies got by the Yorkshire Hackney stallion being kept to breed from.

10917. What is the character of the mares?—I cannot tell you that.

10918. I mean the mares complained of?—I think want of size, want of character, being weedy small animals and not good enough to put thoroughbreds to. I may say in connection with that that when I saw the Duke's scheme in the papers some two or three months ago, that he was buying mares to lend to his tenantry to breed from, I wrote to Mr. Turner, the agent at Welbeck, and asked him what was the result of the buying of the Hackney stallion, and he replied. That is his letter.

10919. Will you read it?

Witness reading—"Dear Sir,—Referring to your letter of the 26th ult., the Yorkshire Hackney stallion, the Duke of Portland bought last year, served between thirty and forty of his tenants' mares, and we hope that the fillies, the produce of these mares, will in time be put to one of his Grace's thoroughbred horses. Of course it will be several years yet before we would be able to see the effect, but I will not fail to let you know about it. In the meantime you may be interested to read the enclosed which is rather a bold scheme on the Duke's behalf." That is this scheme, which perhaps you have seen, that was sent out to all his tenantry. "He is determined if possible to make the tenants breed good animals, and now we are purchasing mares for them, we are going in for the Yorkshire coaching mares and I think they should do very well with the thoroughbred horses." Upon the receipt of this letter I wrote back to Mr. Turner and told him that I had been asked to give evidence before the Commission, that perhaps he had also been asked, I said, "If you are not asked may I quote this letter." He replies, "I have not the slightest objection to your quoting any part of my letter to you, if you think it will be of service to your evidence. I do not think the Commission are likely to call upon me." You see his Grace is buying coaching mares.

10920. I was going to ask you, up to the formation of this scheme from what class of animal did the tenants try to breed?—To breed hunters from his Grace's thoroughbred.

10921. And that is still the object eventually?—Yes.

10922. The introduction of the Hackney being I suppose to give bone and substance?—Substance and action.

10923. Is there anything more you would like to say on that point?—No, except that you will observe that they are buying coaching mares, and of course you perfectly understand there is a difference between the Yorkshire coaching horse and the Cleveland horse; the Yorkshire coaching horse has a cross of thoroughbred blood in him, he is much lighter with finer action, steps up high, a very valuable harness horse.

10924. Have you formed any general opinion as to the soundness of the Hackney as a breed?—I think as a breed they are remarkably free from unsoundness.

10925. And as to their endurance and stamina?—I have not much experience of the endurance of the Hackney except this, I have observed for about three years three horses coming into Newcastle, one in single harness and a pair, certainly the three best horses that come into Newcastle driving, pure-bred Hackneys. I wrote about a fortnight ago to the owner and asked how they were bred, knowing I was to come here and I found they were all pure-bred Hackneys and all by "Wildfire." They step high, go fast and keep on going, certainly the three best harness horses I know of, and show a great deal of quality.

10926. Have you had much experience of half-bred Hackneys?—No, I have not; there are very few bred in my country. You were asking me about the soundness of the Hackneys, well, I have examined these Hackneys for a long time, I have examined for the Royal Agricultural Society of England several times, also for the Royal Commission; I am acting for them again next week. I have also examined at the great Yorkshire Show for the last three years, along with Mr. Cope, Chief Veterinary Officer of the Board of Agriculture. Well, in examining horses at the shows we examine by number, I don't know one of them, therefore, I keep no record, but I knew that Mr. Cope did keep a record of the Yorkshire examinations, and I wrote to him asking if he would give me the record of the Hackneys for the last three years and I got this from him:—In 1894 we examined 15 Hackney stallions and rejected 2; in 1895 we examined 13 and rejected 2; and in 1896 we examined 14 and none were rejected, that is we examined 42 Hackney stallions, and rejected 4, and it is only fair to say that one of these horses rejected was afterwards passed sound at other shows.

10927. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Who writes that?—I got that information from Mr. Cope, of the Board of Agriculture, he has acted for a long time for the Yorkshire Society, and for three years I have assisted him in that.

10928. CHAIRMAN.—I don't know whether you have any knowledge of Ireland?—I have been two or three times there. Some years ago I used to go over there to examine horses.

10929. Lord LONDONDERRY.—These would be hunters?—Yes, and thoroughbreds.

10930. CHAIRMAN.—Have you sufficient knowledge to form an opinion as to what breed of stallions should be encouraged in Ireland in order to generally improve horse-breeding in the country?—I think the first thing to settle upon is what sort of mares have you to put the stallions to, it is little consequence what stallions you send if the mares are not adapted

to them. For instance, I saw a great number of small mares lately, blood mares, and those put to a thoroughbred, I think, would be a failure. I think the light blood mare of the country would be improved with a cross of the Hackney, it all depends on the mares you are going to breed from.

10931. This scheme that we were speaking about, of the Duke of Portland's, the idea is to bring in the Hackney cross once and go back again to the thoroughbred?—Precisely so, that is the present scheme to put the thoroughbred upon the Yorkshire mare.

10932. Is that your idea as regards these light blood mares you speak of in Ireland, that there should be an introduction of the Hackney blood, and that would give sufficient stamina to make them suitable for the thoroughbred?—Yes, I think you would get substance, straighter legs and feet, and action, and the geldings would sell well, better sellers than if by a thoroughbred. They would be sold for harness horses and general utility horses, and the mares bred that way by a Hackney are then, I think, very much improved to breed hunters when put to the thoroughbred.

10933. Would you consider Hackney action desirable in a hunter?—Certainly not.

10934. And the mare would be improved by the Hackney?—Yes, and it would be taken out again by the thoroughbred.

10935. You don't think that action would go on for generations?—Not if the horse had straight action and was uniform—one piece like another. I think that he would stamp his progeny. We must always remember in breeding, whether horses, cattle, dogs, or birds, that it is the size gives the external appearance to the progeny. You get colour, shape, size, and markings from the sire—all the external characteristics. I believe that applies to breeding nearly everything you breed—poultry, and birds, and everything.

10936. I don't know whether you formed any opinion as to the quality of the thoroughbred sires in Ireland?—I cannot do that. I don't know them.

10937. For this class of light mare you would prefer a sound suitable Hackney stallion to an equally sound suitable thoroughbred?—I would. I think there is nothing so little value as a small, weedy thoroughbred. These little thoroughbreds generally turn their toes out, and are ill-shapen, and only make a small price, and become slaves in cars and cabs.

10938. Mr. La Touche.—You have been at the Dublin Horse Show?—Yes, sir.

10939. And seen a number of very valuable hunters there?—I have.

10940. Would you think the *prestige* and value of these hunters in any way enhanced by the fact that there is no admixture of Hackney blood in them?—I would never think to try to breed a hunter from a Hackney stallion.

10941. I did not mean to breed a hunter from a Hackney stallion, but to breed a hunter out of a mare got by a Hackney stallion?—Certainly, sir.

10942. We breed very good hunters without having that?—No doubt of it.

10943. You don't think that the hunters are enhanced in value by the fact of their not having this cross?—If he has substance and is up to weight with quality, and all you require he is better without it.

10944. You think he is better without it if you can get the substance in some other way?—Yes, if you can get the substance and shape; but I am thinking of the little mares I saw in Dublin and about Kildare—small, light, weedy mares. I think there is ample room for all kinds of horses in Ireland, and there is nothing sells so well as action. Nothing enhances value more than action.

10945. The fact remains that Ireland has got a great character for one particular breed, and you admit that that breed is better without an admixture of Hackney blood if you can get it as we have got it?—Yes.

10946. I take it that you would consider that it is a dangerous experiment introducing blood that you think might have a deleterious effect upon the hunter breeding?—You must perfectly understand that I would never think of introducing a Hackney upon a mare that is well adapted to breed a hunter. It is the great many misfit mares that would be improved by a Hackney. If I had a mare that I thought good enough, with substance and shape and soundness, to breed a hunter, I should put her to a thoroughbred, if the mare was right.

10947. But this misfit mare you speak of. You think that if she was put to the Hackney she might produce a mare that would be capable of producing a hunter?—I do; and, if not a hunter, a high-class harness horse. You are certain to get a valuable horse.

10948. Do you think that hunter would be as good as the ones we breed now?—It might not be so fast; but it would be a valuable animal. I am sure of that.

10949. You say the sire is apt to mark its personal appearance on the produce?—That is so.

10950. Do you think the head of the Hackney is calculated to enhance the value of a hunter?—I have seen Hackneys with very beautiful heads and thoroughbreds with very common heads.

10851. Did you see the Hackney stallions that are the property of the Congested Districts Board?—No.

10952. You speak of the soundness of Hackneys. I suppose one of the principal causes of unsoundness in horses is undue exertion?—Severe exertion, that will account for a great many unsoundnesses, breaks down and such like.

10953. I mean to say not only severe exertion on the part of the animal itself, but on the part of its progenitors?—No, I think you are going a step further than I can follow you there.

10954. Take the case of a sire and dam who have been submitted to such severe exertion in early youth as to become unsound, I suppose you would think that they would probably transmit their unsoundness?—It would depend on the character of the unsoundness. If it was simply a breakdown, or a split pastern, or anything like that I would not expect that to be transmitted; but the hereditary unsoundness, there is no doubt about that.

10955. But as regards the individual animal himself, of course the life of a thoroughbred horse that is put in training as a yearling, and has to submit to the greatest possible exertion of which he is capable, is more calculated to try his unsoundness than the life of a Hackney horse?—You will find out the soft places sooner. It is an unfortunate thing that most of the thoroughbreds are done before four or five years old.

10956. It is quite possible if a Hackney was submitted to the same test he probably would be unsound?—He is not fit to gallop, and not meant for that purpose, he is a roadster.

10957. He is not fit for very great exertion, in fact?—Yes, at his pace, but certainly not fit to gallop like a racehorse any more than a carthorse.

10958. As a matter of fact he is not submitted to trotting at his pace at the age of one year?—Well, they are beginning to get trained now very early.

10959. Lord Ashtown.—Have you had any experience in examining half-bred Hackneys?—I could not tell you how they are bred. I had a very large examining practice when I was in practice, and my work was mostly connected with light horses, hunters, and harness horses.

10960. And you did not know how they were bred?—No, I did not inquire.

10961. Mr. Wrench.—But you have examined at shows a good deal in addition?—Oh, yes.

10962. And you have a large experience all over the country?—I have.

10963. Now, we have had it given before us in Ireland that the bone of the Hackney differs very

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much from the bone of the thoroughbred, that one seems quite porous and light, and the other like ivory and hard, and weighs more. I should very much like to have your opinion on that, whether you have examined the bone of the various breeds?—Only in an ordinary way, with the naked eye and hand. I have heard that theory years ago, but I have yet to know that it is a fact.

10964. Is it possible, without a microscopic examination, to detect the bones of different horses?—They are so near allied that if you ask any man accustomed to anatomy he would say there is no difference in the bone; but it would only settle that question to employ a very good microscopist to make sections and examine them under the microscope, and examine them as to the amount of earthy matter in the consistency of the bones.

10965. You don't think any man who was not an expert could give an opinion on that matter that was worth having?—Certainly not.

10966. That it could only be ascertained by a severe test?—Yes.

10967. Do you know whether there has ever been a test of that kind made?—I cannot find out that it has.

10968. Have you consulted any special authority on that point?—I have, and I can neither find out in books or from the best anatomists or physiologists I could consult.

10969. Therefore any expression of that kind is not of much value?—I should say none at all.

10970. We have been also told that Hackneys are very liable to curbs and curby hocks?—That is not my experience. I cannot remember ever having seen a Hackney with curb.

10971. Do you think they are sound generally in their legs and hocks?—They are the soundest breed of horses I know of.

10972. And we have also been told that they have delicate constitutions, that they don't recover from illness as easily as thoroughbred horses?—Well, I cannot speak very much as to their recovery from illness. I have not been in general practice now since 1880, but I have no reason to think he is slower to recover from illness than any other animal.

10973. Is his constitution hardy?—What I have seen of them have been hardy, the three horses I know of in my district, are the three best horses I ever saw on the road.

10974. Do you know personally anything as to the origin of the Hackneys?—I know that they are a very old breed.

10975. If you were breeding a hunter do you think Clydesdale or Hackney blood would be most objectionable?—The Clydesdale by all means, there is far more danger in Ireland of getting a mixture of cart-horse blood than there is of the Hackney. It is more than twenty-five years since I saw danger in Ireland from the number of cart-mares I saw there.

10976. Do you think Clydesdale blood would produce much more softness and non-staying power than the Hackney?—Yes.

10977. And do you know that one-third of the stallions in Ireland are Clydesdale or half-bred cart-horses?—I am very sorry to hear you say so.

10978. Dealing with small farmers who have not the mares to breed hunters, do you think it would pay them best to breed horses with action, or to try to breed hunters?—I should try to breed Hackneys and useful roadsters, ride and drive horses, harness horses.

10979. Do you think that would pay them better?—I am sure it would, particularly if they had action, nothing enhances the value of a horse more than superior action all round, and that you would get from the Hackney.

10980. There is one question we have had debated at the Royal Dublin Society lately, with regard to the hereditary soundness of horses, and that is on the question of grunting; do you think grunting is a hereditary unsoundness or not?—I think it is an unsoundness.

10981. Is it transmitted, in your opinion?—I have no doubt that grunting is very closely allied to roaring, and we do know that roaring is hereditary, and therefore it follows that grunting must also be hereditary, they are closely allied.

10982. Perhaps if you were asked your opinion you would say it was hereditary unsoundness?—Certainly, and I would never pass a horse that grunted, I have known a roarer that you could not make grunt, and I have known a horse that grunted, that did not make a noise in his gallop, but my opinion is that a horse that grunts takes the first opportunity to become a roarer.

10983. And you would not breed from a grunter?—I would not breed from such an animal.

10984. CHAIRMAN.—Would not the specific gravity of the bone, be some indication of the density?—It would be one of the tests.

10985. Would not the difference between the specific gravity of the bone of the thoroughbred and the bone of the Clydesdale, give one a rough and ready notion of the relative densities?—Before you commence this test you would have to have corresponding bones of the different horses; if you take the cannon bone or the femur, you would have to have the corresponding bone from another horse, you would have to have the bone from horses of the one age, they would have to be mature horses, about six years old, because as they get older they get more brittle. If you took a five year old bone against a fifteen year old the analysis would come differently.

10986. We have had it in evidence from veterinary surgeons and a good many people that, as a matter of fact, the bone of the thoroughbred is denser than the bone of any other horse?—I have heard it said so. I don't disagree. I only say I am not aware of the fact. I have hunted up all the authorities I could, and I consulted one of the very best anatomists in the North of England, Professor Hewdon, of the Durham College of Medicine. I put it to him and he could not say it. It is a question you will have to get settled by a microscopist. My own opinion is that there is no difference.

10987. You think, for instance, that the Belgian horse that was mentioned to us yesterday as having a bone perfectly porous and light, that probably it is just as dense and heavy as the thoroughbred?—There you have gone to the other extreme. I was not thinking of the cart horse or the Belgian horse. I was thinking of the Hackney bone and the thoroughbred bone. I got two bones sent from Newmarket, but they were bones of a two year old, that were no earthly use to compare with the bones I had, old bones, so I didn't go any further.

10988. It was suggested by Mr. Wrench that a large proportion of the sires in Ireland were Clydesdales or a cross of a Clydesdale. You have no knowledge of that yourself?—No. sir. I hope it is not so, because if you have got any Clydesdale blood in your hunting mares it is all up with the character of the Irish hunter.

10989. But still the Irish hunter somehow maintains its character?—Not with Clydesdale blood in it.

10990. But still it has not lost its character, and you would deduce from that that there are not so many of the Clydesdale blood?—I cannot think it possible.

10991. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—The majority of the carty stallions, I think, are more or less in one locality?—They are kept away from the hunter brood-mares at any rate.

10992. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think the Hackney is a suitable sire to get a riding horse?—If I could get the shapes.

10993. I mean in the first cross?—There is no man in the world so fond of a bit of blood as I am, if I could get the shapes I like combined with thoroughbred blood. That is the animal I would like, but

it is so difficult to get a thoroughbred one that is sound to begin with, and with good shape and good temper.

10994. I think you suggested as regards Ireland was for a certain class of mare, you thought the best thing that could be done would be to put her to the Hackney, and then put the result, the fillies, back to the thoroughbred?—Pretty nearly carrying out his Grace the Duke of Portland's scheme.

10995. What I wanted to ask you is, would the first cross of the Hackney make a riding horse?—It might and might not, the probability is the dam was full of thoroughbred blood, and you would get a certain amount of nervous energy and vigour from the dam, and if the shoulders were right you would get a very nice animal.

10996. Mr. La Touche.—You don't hold that a mixture of cart blood is any advantage to the hunter?—Quite the opposite.

10997. You don't hold that any mixture of Hackney blood is any advantage?—Except for size.

10998. If you get size without it?—Yes; but I cannot; that is where the trouble comes in.

10999. Which do you think is the most discernable to the ordinary observer, an admixture of cart blood or Hackney blood?—The cart blood, certainly.

11000. Mr. Wrench.—Have you formed any opinion about breeding from half-bred sires?—I don't believe in using a half-bred sire of any kind. I don't care what you are trying to breed you must have a pure sire on the top. Your sire must be pure if you want a success.

11001. You think it would not be a safe experiment to breed from horses with three or four thoroughbred crosses?—The probability is that the mare he would get would be half-bred too, and you never know what a half-bred is going to do in breeding. The first cross is generally a good animal, and is the best. After that I think it is all a lottery. I think the sire should always be pure.

11002. Lord Rathdonnell.—How long has the Hackney been a pure breed?—I cannot tell. There is a picture I saw downstairs of the Duke of Hamilton riding a hack, that is a long time ago.

11003. Was that a pure-bred one?—I believe so. I always understood so.

11004. Did they call them Hackneys in those days?—You are going too far back for me. They might call them roadsters.

11005. When did the Hackneys become a pure breed, you mentioned you would only use a pure-bred sire; when did the Hackney sire become pure?—I could not tell you, but if you get the date of the formation of the Hackney Stud-book.

11006. That was in 1884, I think?—But they go back a long time, and are very closely inbred.

11007. Mr. La Touche.—Mares were selected from their personal appearance and put in the stud-book, and their progeny classed as pure-bred Hackneys within thirteen years?—I cannot tell you the time, but they can be traced a long way back, no doubt, and they are very closely inbred, many of them.

11008. Lord Rathdonnell.—Have they mares placed in the stud-book at the present time by what they call selection?—Yes.

11009. Does that constitute them pure?—I cannot tell you, I am not a Hackney breeder or a member of the Hackney Society.

11010 Mr. Wrench.—Do you think inbreeding makes a horse more prepotent?—Certainly; if you want an instance of that look at Christopher Wilson's "Sir George" pony, that was very much inbred and you see the ponies now all over the country, and you see what very good ponies they are.

11011. Lord Ashtown.—It fixes the type?—Yes.

11012. Chairman.—Is there anything else you would like to say?—Yes, I would like to plead with the Committee to do all they can to prevent the docking of foals, I think it is cruel to dock a poor little foal and leave him to the mercy of the flies.

11013. Mr. La Touche.—We never do it in Ireland, it is practically unknown?—Then I say no more. It is done in England, and there is many an animal spoiled by it, an animal ought not to be docked until he was matured, the probability is he is worth more with his tail on than with it off. I had a table with the statistics of the York Christmas Fair, the number of horses that came from Ireland to York. This was in reference to the scarcity of good brood mares, which is an acknowledged fact all over the country, formerly we had very large fairs, and the business of buying and selling horses was nearly all done at the large fairs. Now agents go about continuously buying horses for the continent, and there is a continual stream going across to the continent. At the last Yorkshire Christmas Fair I got this from the North Eastern Railway Company, the number of horses that went from York, forwarded to Harwick was 51; the number sent to Grimsby was 25; and the number sent to Hull was 22; that is 98 horses went from York Christmas Fair to the continent, the probability is that they were all mares of the very best type, good-looking and sound, the foreigner always buys a sound horse and never buys a crib-biter. The number of horses received at York from Ireland was 170, and we sent 98 to the continent, these being in all probability all mares, that partly accounts for the scarcity of good mares.

11014. Chairman.—Have you any suggestion as to any possible remedy for that state of things?—No, my lord; let the farmer breed the best he can and sell them for the most money he can. Many of our best mares are bought by the foreigners, those kept at home are sold for a good price as hunters and harness mares, and only come back to breed when they are worn out.

11015. Lord Rathdonnell.—You have no idea how many mares there were in the 170?—No. One of the officials of the N. E. Company, Mr. Inman, was saying how large a number of horses were sent to the Continent, and I wrote to him and got him to give me this return officially.

11016. Were the 170 chiefly brought by dealers from Ireland into York?—They were in the hands of Irish dealers, brought from Ireland to York to sell.

Veterinary Lieutenant-Colonel J. B. H. Hallen, C.I.E., Stratford-on-Avon, examined.

11017. Chairman.—You were Inspector-General of the horse-breeding in India?—Yes.

11018. Are you now?—No, I am retired.

11019. How long did you fill that appointment?—I held that appointment as Inspector-General of breeding in the Civil Veterinary Department eighteen years.

11020. Did you hear the evidence of Sir John Watson?—I did.

11021. There were some figures and statistics asked from Sir John Watson, which he said you might perhaps be able to supply. Perhaps the simplest plan would be that you should give us the figures you have?—I can give you the statistics of the prizes that have been earned by the produce of the different breeds of stallions. I left the paper yesterday at the India Office, and it will be filled up by about two o'clock to-day, filled up for eight or ten years. They are accurate returns taken from the annual report of the Civil Veterinary Department. The stallions were thoroughbred and the half-bred; under the head of half-bred we include these that have been sent out as trotters, roadsters, half-bred, Australian and stud-breds, those horses that were bred in the old Stud Department

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which was abolished in the year 1876, when the Horse-breeding Department was formed; and there was also one Turcoman horse, from North of Afghanistan. The Turcoman horses are very good horses, but very difficult to get. We had the opportunity of getting this one, and it proved a very good horse, something of the Arab type. The Turcomans are raiders and live in the saddle, men like the Arabs, and must have good horses that go a long distance and have good legs.

11022. Can you tell us how these various classes of stallions are distributed about India; do they endeavour to suit the peculiarities of the mares in different localities?—Yes, the officers of the Civil Veterinary Department and Horse-breeding Department make inspections at centres of all mares that are brought up by owners who wish them to receive a brand, with a view of being eligible for the service of Government stallions. When a mare is certified after examination free from hereditary disease, and fit or likely to become suitable as a brood mare to get army horses—I may mention that we don't breed for army horses alone, we breed for the general improvement of the horse stock of India, but of course as there is a great demand in the army we try if possible to breed a horse likely to suit the army—then we allot each mare in the book, in the register, according to her shape, make, and breed, for they have several ocal breeds, to the particular class of horse. We cannot say which horse, we either say to the thoroughbred, or the half-bred English, or the Arab, or stud-bred, according as the class of horse that is available in that district, we cannot unfortunately, as the mare belongs to private owners, direct, we can only recommend or suggest that they should be sent, and as a rule with a little pains, they generally listen to reason, and they will send their mares to the horse you indicate. When the mare is sent to that horse there is a certificate given to the owner that his mare, registered number so and so, if she has a pedigree, and now-a-days she often has a pedigree, has been covered by such a horse at this date, that is his credential. When he goes to a show he will take a certificate that his mare is in foal by that horse. Likewise when the mare foals another certificate is given to the effect that the mare gave birth to this foal by such a horse on such a date, with the markings on him, star or whatever it may be, and colour also. And having the two certificates, as a rule there is not much forgery, we have the covering certificate and the birth certificate, but to answer your question as to whether they always get the horse indicated, they don't always.

11023. What I mean is whether a particular class of horse, say the thoroughbred or the Hackney, is sent to particular localities in India, because that particular breed is thought to suit specially the particular class of mare found there?—We tried that. We have done it in part, not entirely because some breeders won't put their mares to a thoroughbred, some won't put them to a Hackney, and some won't put them to an Arab. The old Indian horse-breeder sometimes has an opinion of his own and likes to have his choice of stallions, and so in order to get that mare into the ranks of brood mares and prevent the owner putting her to a worthless country stallion, full of disease of all sorts; we have to humour them and place horses at their convenience. So you will understand that as a rule we have more than one breed in one locality. We would like very much to keep to one breed in one locality, but we should lose a lot of mares if we did.

11024. Do you agree with what Sir John Watson said that little impression, or no impression has been made on the native horses in India by the importation of European stallions?—In part, but slightly. I was in India about 44 years, and my hobby was horse-breeding, and I lived more or less in the saddle and was always about the country and know a great deal about the old Stud Department. Had the old Stud Department been only working in a favourable soil and climate suited for equine breeding we should have made by this time a most wonderful impression on the horse stock of the country, but unfortunately in the days when the stud first originated, 1794, our frontier was very far south, south-east, and we could not get into a good climate. It was a climate moist, humid, with a few hillocks about, and the stud officers of that day selected the best ground they could in this morassy country and tried to breed horses, but it was impossible, the climate was dead against them, though they did get a certain amount of stock. Now I agree with General Watson. Our stock was of use for a generation; it did work, but as a rule the stock from horses so bred in this bad atmosphere and climate was not got. Well, one small stud was formed further north in 1816, but the really good stud was formed about 1840, and I will by-and-bye with your permission hand you over a paper I wrote on the subject, upon which the precise accurate dates are recorded, and I will leave it for the perusal of the members of the Commission. This gives a brief history of the Stud Department, and the reasons are hinted at why it failed. It was not from a due support of stallions, but simply because it was out of the horse-breeding zone altogether. So I agree with General Watson that in these localities they have made no impression. The fact of the matter is that horses of any kind are not to be found there. They bring them there and breed from them, and they do not continue. Even the donkeys in the country are poor wretched kinds, they can hardly walk, they have crooked legs and very little osseous tissue in their legs; they are worked young and get malformations and diminish in size, and even that hardy animal cannot live in that part of the country. Now to go back to General Watson's question. Had the equine race not been suited to the climate of Northern India, the local horses found there would have been wiped out. There he is a remarkable animal, extremely hardy, made hardy by the soil and climate and the management, sometimes very bad, from the ignorance, not intentional, of the horse's owner, from tropical heat of the sun and frosty nights of winter, very often half starved. That horse has survived all that treatment and remains a very hardy grand little animal for work, hard as steel, but we unfortunately had not our studs up in those districts in early days. Now we are working those districts with our stallions, and I feel assured that during my time—I can go back for nearly half a century—I do see an improvement.

11025. The impression, you think, will be permanent?—No doubt, if we continue breeding on proper lines. I think we must remember this, Mr. Chairman, that the habitat of the horse originally was Eastern; and when we do take the thoroughbred horse out again to India we are taking him back virtually to his climate; it suits him well. Just in the same way with plants; if we take plants from India, we can bring them to this climate and improve them. Take, for instance, the rhubarb. You can find the wild rhubarb; it came originally from India. Nowadays it is a very hardy little plant there, but has not much flavour. If you take the European rhubarb out there, it will live and go on if you take care of it, but you must feed it properly with manure; it has been a pampered plant here. And so it is with horses. If we introduce a superior kind of horse, which is the result of great care and culture, we must go on taking care of that horse on the same lines that he has been improved on.

11026. Have you any definite opinion as to which is the best class of stallion, the thoroughbred, the Hackney, the Arab, or the Australian thoroughbred?—At the commencement of my services in the Stud Department in 1860, I was put in charge of the Bombay Stud Department, and was all in favour of the thoroughbred and the Arab. I am a great admirer of blood. I have been in my time a sportsman, fond of hog hunting and coursing. I was always mounted

on Arabs; and so, when I superintended the stud in Bombay, I would not have thought of the half-bred, or what we call Hackneys now. But after ten years I was sent up to the North of India for duty. I was on a commission to report on the Bengal Stud Department, and I had then a grand opportunity of seeing what were the results of the use of different horses. It is alluded to in either that paper or this; and I found that the best horses in the Stud Department were those that had a dash of what we call Hackney blood, which was called in those days half-bred. Those horses were supplied by a contractor called Shaw. He sent out a certain number, of which, like all those horses imported there, were two or three leading horses, very good—really, I believe, pedigree horses, for their stock remained very good, and I found had the best bone, and many of their stock turned out very good stallions, and their progeny again was very good; so that after three or four years on Stud Commission duty, looking at these horses, at different ages, day after day, inspecting them—and then during that time seeing them grow up and watching them, and inspecting regiments and batteries which had them—I came to the conclusion that the thoroughbred and the Arab, although everything in the way of blood, could not out of the mare of the country or the half-bred mare get a remount up to the weight of British cavalry; and it was the desire of Government to breed horses with that in view, if possible to mount the cavalry.

11027. You think the Hackney sire is preferable to the thoroughbred sire for the purpose of getting remounts?—Yes, provided he is of the proper stamp and of the proper shape (I would not advise one with a bad shoulder), and not too extravagant action—we don't want extravagant action in remounts—the result has been that no doubt his stock has proved very efficient for British cavalry and native cavalry. I may mention that the Inspector-General of cavalry, General Luck, out in India, reported on the horses, as found in one regiment of British Lancers, in the following words. I may mention that he had a large cavalry camp at Aligart for the purpose of drilling many regiments together, and finding out what they were worth both as to men and horses, and this went on for a month or six weeks, and then he submitted a report on the horses and men.

11028. We don't want to know about the men?—In his report he says:—"The small, compact horses lasted far better than the big ones. Most of the Australians over 15.2 were much pulled down at the close of the manœuvres. The country-bred horses of the 5th Lancers did well. The regiment is now almost entirely mounted on this class of horses; they compare most favourably with the Australians, and, as is well known, thrive far better on service when on short rations."

11029. That is comparing native-bred horses with Australian-bred horses?—And also there were some by Arabs.

11030. He does not mean horses by Australian horses out of a native mare?—No; imported Walers.

11031. I wanted to get at your opinion of the relative merits of the thoroughbred and Hackney to put to the native mares?—These are some of the results that he speaks well of, as having proved good horses and at the end of the long trial they were better than the Australians, did their work well, and were in the best condition at the end.

11032. But it does not tell us how these country-bred horses were got?—No, it does not; but the statistics I am going to give you will show you precisely how they were got by the different classes of horses.

11033. I gather from you that you are of the same opinion as Sir John Watson, that the thoroughbred and the Hackney produce equally good results, or pretty much the same; not very much to choose between the two?—There is only one thing about the thoroughbred when he is put to the light-limbed mare in Northern India. He, as a rule, gets very light-limbed stock, at the same time inclined to be leggy and not deep enough in girth; but if you were to put that same mare to the Hackney you would have shorter legs and more bone, and therefore better able to carry weight. And, moreover, the commandants of native cavalry regiments find the stock of half-breds are enduring. They do very well on the short commons. They never give them more than necessary in native cavalry. They do well and keep their condition, and, therefore, they are favourites with the owners of the horses. Every man owns his own horse in the native cavalry; it does not belong to the Government.

11034. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What class of horses did you compare in the cavalry regiment, you mentioned, as being stouter than some others. You mentioned two or three different classes of horses in one regiment that General Luck inspected?—You want to know which horses were the better of the country breeds. He compared them only with the Australians; not with each other. He said they were generally in good condition. He only compared them with the Australians.

11035. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—That is India-bred horses *versus* Australian?—Yes. I may mention that as the well bred horse is an Eastern animal he is only going back to his own country and he will do well there; but I know many people form the opinion about the horse that he is like our dog. If you take European dogs out there they go to the bad—their whelps are worth nothing; but then those dogs are foreign to India. They are not the Eastern dog. They go into a new climate quite unsuited to them, and fail to continue their breed.

11036. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Do you think if a horse going out to India was fed in the normal condition that a native horse is fed, and treated in the same way—do you think he would gradually assume the native type?—That is to say, if a thoroughbred went there in how many generations do you expect him to deteriorate into the native horse? Is that the question?

11037. Yes, something of that sort. You would expect that he would tend to deteriorate?—Yes. If he were not of a hardy constitution in a few generations he would be wiped out in breed. They must have blood; but it is placing the thoroughbred in a very hard position. If you mounted, say, a regiment of cavalry on nothing but thoroughbreds I don't think they would go through the campaign well on short commons.

11038. We have it in evidence from the veterinary surgeon who was attached to that regiment you speak of, the 5th Lancers, at some of these manœuvres that the cross of the thoroughbred was much better for military purposes. This gentleman said he was in a regiment, the 5th Lancers, which was mounted on country-bred horses; that it was very easy to distinguish the difference between the country-bred ones got by Hackneys and those got by thoroughbreds; that fewer of the thoroughbreds came to the sick lines, fewer were lame. You got fewer bone diseases with a better breed of troop horses. Does that agree with your personal experience?—No.

11039. You are going to hand us in a return of the prizes which were given to the different breeds of animals in the Government studs—will this return show the ages of the animals?—No, it will not; only the prizes and breeds.

11040. I understood from Sir John Watson that the horses are generally bought for remount purposes at the age of eighteen months?—For the British cavalry and artillery, with a view of putting them ultimately when five year old in their ranks. Sometimes they get hold of a good horse at three or four year old and buy him.

11041. Would some of these prize-winners be found among the horses purchased at the age of eighteen months for the British army?—Yes, as a rule. The horses that get the prizes are the best, and are young horses and purchasable by the remount department.

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They generally get them, because they give the highest price as a rule. The only exception is where a native chief may come in with a big purse, and give anything for a horse he likes; but as a rule the British Government have the pre-emption, because they give a good price.

11042. Would the returns show what prizes were for brood mares and what for three or four year old?—No, but there are returns in horse show reports which show the different ages and the prizes at the different ages.

11043. CHAIRMAN.—What returns would they be in?—In the annual report of the Civil Veterinary Department; then there is another report, an appendix to this, which concerns annual horse shows and fairs, and I think you might get a copy of this from the India Office, and you will be able to get exactly the information you want.

11044. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—It is very important we should have the ages of the horses when the prizes are awarded to them?—I can tell you that they are awarded to foals, yearlings, two year old, three year old, four year old; all different ages get prizes.

11045. Do you find as a matter of experience that the animal that gets prizes as a foal often gets prizes as a four year old?—It depends a good deal on how he has been fed in the meantime, if he has not changed hands, if he has been cared for he has got a good chance; but if he gets strangles or worms a foal may fall off and become worth nothing, though it may have been the best at a year or eighteen months old.

11046. Col. ST. QUINTIN. — Before the present system of breeding was inaugurated the Indian Government had a system of *haras*—of breeding establishments of their own?—Yes.

11047. And they bred their own horses—can you tell us what class of mare and stallions were chiefly used in those—do you remember the beautiful old stud-bred before the studs were broken up?—Yes.

11048. How were they bred?—Chiefly out of the stud-bred mares, but now and then mares were imported; some mares were imported from England and some from Australia, but as a rule the stud-bred mares were the produce of the stud themselves.

11049. What were the stallions chiefly?—Thoroughbreds and Arabs, stud-breds, half-breds (English introduced about thirty to forty years ago), and occasionally an Australian thoroughbred.

11050. They were chiefly thoroughbred?—About half and half, half Arab and half thoroughbred.

11051. When you indented for these Hackneys for the stud did you do so with the view of getting cavalry or artillery horses, or for both?—The aim was for the general improvement of horses in the country, the feeling of the military people was that we were getting studs up solely to mount them; well, we hoped to mount them, but we also wished to improve the breeding of horses in India. We hoped that the military people would get the best of the stock; we went in for getting both riding and driving horses.

11052. Do you agree with Sir John Watson that the Hackney is equally good for breeding for cavalry as for artillery purposes?—It depends on the shape of the Hackney, if he has good shoulders and shape, good action, action that will take a horse over the road well, and not too high knee action.

11053. You consider that he can get a good riding horse?—I have seen some excellent riding horses by Hackneys.

11054. The first cross?—I am going to qualify that by saying I deem it a great mistake that there is not more care taken with regard to shoulders in the breeding of Hackneys. I must tell you my opinion about shoulders; the shoulder of the thoroughbred is a grand shoulder as a rule, and there are some very poor shoulders in thoroughbreds, but look how that shoulder has been made, he has been going at a walk or a gallop over the most lovely ground, a billiard table racecourse, for how many generations, how many years, and therefore he has got into a most beautiful shape as far as shoulders and extension powers, and becomes well fitted to go over turf and level ground at a tremendous pace with a light weight on his back. That is his work at the present day, and that is really what he is suited for. Now a Hackney has to do different work altogether, and I will put the Arab in with the Hackney as far as shoulders are concerned. The Arab, what does he do? In his native country he has to go through deep sand, and to have a very powerful shoulder to pull himself along and pick his feet out of the sand, his pastern gets long as a rule from the weight dwelling in the sand, and his shoulder gets very thick and chubby because he has to use it in that particular way. At the same time when a raid comes on he has to go at a very fair pace to seize the property, the booty, and his shoulder is fair, not a good shoulder, but well suited for his work. Now, a Hackney has not a riding shoulder, because he is generally used for driving purposes. I am not an admirer of fancy horses. I heard Mr. Burdett-Coutts describe yesterday the fashionable action for a Hackney, but for a general utility horse we do not require that kind of action.

11055. Do you think the thoroughbred horses that were sent to India for many years were good of their type?—As good as they could be obtained.

11056. For the money?—I must tell you that the late Inspector-General, General Thornhill, and the present one, General Watson, if they saw a good horse above 350 guineas, they could always buy him. General Thornhill told me he had not seen horses fitted for the India stud as a rule above 350 guineas; except you get hold of a really grand horse that you would get for £1,000, £1,200, or £1,400, there are exceptions, but as a rule the thoroughbred obtainable for our district work to be sent out and not always receive the best treatment in the breeding district was obtainable by General Thornhill, and is by General Watson up to a certain number. I think Lord Mayo was quite right. I quite agree with him when he said we could not get annually more than ten or twelve of the perfect horses we want in India, and there are very few perfect horses amongst thoroughbreds as regards bone and conformation. I have seen one or two grand thoroughbreds out in India, but we know the most perfect looking horse does not always get the best stock.

11057. If you could get sires of substance in thoroughbreds would you prefer them to the Hackney for military purposes, for cavalry purposes?—If you could get a regiment mounted on what we call a perfect military horse, thoroughbred, up to eighteen or twenty stone, you would be better mounted than you would be on Hackneys, but I say they are not to be had.

11058. You said that the Australian horse, a great many of which came to India, are really from highly bred English horses, that they were not as good as the country bred, according to the Inspector-General's letter?—No, only the imported ones.

11059. You are not talking of the stallions?—No.

11060. Do you know the native cavalry now prefer the small Australian horse to the country bred?—No; I know one or two regiments did. I know when you were out there they indented on you for Australians.

11061. Mr. WRENCH.—Had you an opportunity of testing the soundness of the horses got by these different stallions after they had done work, when they were in the regiments, to see how they stood the work after manœuvres or the work of the regiment. Did you ever inspect the horses in the regiment to see how they stood, whether those got by thoroughbreds stood better than those got by Hackneys, or *vice versa*?—No, I never inspected it with that view.

11062. Have you any knowledge of the results in that way?—No; in this report I have before me, one of the assistants gives his opinion on that subject.

11063. But you have not yours?—No.

Mr. HENRY NEWMAN examined.

11064. CHAIRMAN.—You are a partner, are you not, in the firm of Messrs. East and Co. ?—No, I am manager, my lord.

11065. They are jobmasters ?—Yes, my lord.

11066. Can you give the Commission an approximate idea of the number of horses you let out on jobbing ?—Well, I could not say exactly that, my lord. I can tell you the number we buy every year and the number we sell when not fit for our work.

11067. Well, how many do you sell ?—It averages 300.

11068. But you let out horses besides ?—Oh, yes, my lord.

11069. Have you any idea of how many you let out ?—I should think somewhere about 1,500 to 2,000.

11070. Where do you get your horses from ?—All parts, chiefly from Ireland.

11071. What parts of Ireland ?—South of Ireland chiefly, some in the North.

11072. Do you buy them yourself through your own agents ?—Yes.

11073. Do you buy them individually yourself or employ agents to buy them ?—We have people over there, agents who pick them up at two and three years old and we buy them just when they are coming four years old.

11074. And you have been in this business for a large number of years ?—I have been in Mr. East's business for the last six years, but I have been in the horse business for the last thirty-five years.

11075. Do you find that you can obtain the class of horse you want as easily in Ireland now as you used to do, is the supply as good as it used to be ?—I don't think it is.

11076. Do you have to give more money for them ?—No, there is not very much difference in the price.

11077. But you think there is not as large a supply ?—Not quite, I think colts have remained the same price, but hunters are dearer than they used to be; I used to buy hunters originally, they are very much dearer than they used to be.

11078. Do you buy hunters now ?—No, we only buy harness colts.

11079. And you buy principally you say in Ireland ?—Yes.

11080. And in England also ?—Yes, a few in England.

11081. And from abroad ?—Yes, we get a few Americans.

11082. What is the class of harness horse you buy in Ireland ?—Horses from 15.3 to 16.1 or 16.2.

11083. Do you know at all how they are bred ?—They are all by thoroughbred sires as a rule. We have bought a few by a horse I think called "Excelsior" in Ireland, a Hackney stallion, we have had a few by him, that is the only horse I know of, of that breed.

11084. Do you attach much importance to the pedigree of the horse you buy ?—Oh, yes, my lord.

11085. Do you get pedigrees with them ?—We like them by thoroughbred horses.

11086. Do you get pedigrees with them ?—Yes, as a rule.

11087. And you think the pedigrees are generally correct ?—Oh, I think so, because we know the horses that are covering in the different districts of Ireland, they are a first class quality of horse, and they must be by some thoroughbred horse or another. We buy them from the men, as a rule, that keep the stallions, so they must know pretty nearly what they are by.

11088. Are your horses generally bought privately or at the fairs ?—They are originally picked up at the fairs by the men we buy them from, we don't go so much to fairs ourselves, because for the last few years we found we could not get them that way. They are selected horses, we never buy horses with much white about them and we could not get them by going about to fairs, for they are picked up before the time. The men we get them from buy them as three-year olds and feed them and keep them for us.

11089. And as compared with the American and English horses, do you think the Irish horse suits your purpose as well as the others, or better ?—Better, I think, they wear better.

11090. What are they used for, the horses you let out ?—Oh, carriage work.

11091. In London ?—Yes, a good many of them, some in the country.

11092. Do you find that these horses got by thoroughbred sires have got sufficiently good action ?—Well, that is the difficulty very often, they have not got action enough.

11093. But when you do get one with action it is much better than anything else, I think ?—They can do work, they can keep on going.

11094. I presume I should be right in saying that it is the same class of horse that is turned into a hunter ?—Yes, my lord.

11095. It may not be particularly adapted for making a hunter, and it makes a harness horse, provided it has got sufficient action ?—Yes, my lord.

11096. Do you agree that the action could be obtained from the Hackney blood ?—The action might, you might get some action from it, but I don't think you will get the length and breadth you want to carry harness. I have never seen any Hackney horse of the size that we require them. For instance, we use a great many horses for ride and drive work, you must have a horse of good length and size for that kind of work, unless they have got good shoulders, and can ride well they are no use for it.

11097. Then for your purposes you think the thoroughbred is as good as the Hackney sire ?—Better, I should say.

11098. The introduction of Hackneys in Ireland is comparatively very recent, do you know anything of Hackneys in Yorkshire and other parts of England ?—We used years ago to buy a great many more horses in Yorkshire than we do now, we have a great difficulty in buying thirty or forty a year, we used to buy a great many more years ago.

11099. Do you attribute that to the fact that they have turned their attention more to breeding Hackneys ?—Certainly.

11100. In fact the Hackney does not breed what you want ?—No.

11101. What do you think the Hackney is suitable for ?—I think they are very suitable for small carriages or for people to drive about in buggies, they may do very well, but I have not had very much experience of the Hackney horse myself, I don't think you can make them into carriage horses.

11102. In former days you found it easier to get the class of horses you require in Yorkshire ?—Years ago you could buy a great many more in Yorkshire than at the present time.

11103. But still they are not quite extinct in Yorkshire ?—No, there are just a few people breeding Cleveland bays and these bigger horses, but they are docking them in Yorkshire, that is one of the great drawbacks to our being able to get horses now, you hardly ever see a horse with his tail on.

11104. Then as regards Ireland, in your particular demand, am I right in supposing that you think that the thoroughbred sire is the class of sire you prefer ?—Oh, yes, my lord.

11105. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You talk about wearing action, do you think the action of the Hackney would be a wearing action in harness, as a useful harness horse ?—Not any that I have seen.

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Mr. Henry Newman.

11106. Have you noticed that their action is an extravagant action?—They are extravagant in front very often and not so good behind, most of them.

11107. Does it last out a long day?—I don't think it does, I don't think they go any better than the others when they have gone out half-an-hour.

11108. Where in Ireland used you to get the majority of your large horses?—Limerick and the South of Ireland.

11109. And you get them there still?—Oh, yes.

11110. But as regards the East Riding of Yorkshire, you have almost given up going there?—We have very nearly given up going there, I think we got twenty horses there last year.

11111. And that is entirely since the introduction of the Hackney blood?—Yes.

11112. Used you to get a great many?—Not in the last six years since I have been with the Messrs. East, but before that, they used to buy a great many in Yorkshire.

11113. Mr. La Touche.—I suppose you do occasionally buy a harness horse got by a Hackney sire?—Occasionally.

11114. Do you find that he can do anything that a horse got by a thoroughbred sire cannot do?—No.

11115. And don't you think that a thoroughbred sire can do things that a Hackney sire cannot do?—They are not always such fine goers, you cannot perhaps get them in such large numbers; but they do the riding part which a Hackney sire cannot do, and you cannot get Hackneys of such a size; they do for a small victoria or brougham, but when you want to put them into a landau or large carriage you cannot get them size enough.

11116. I don't wish to ask you a personal question, but do you give prices for those colts that are remunerative to breeders?—I think so.

11117. You say the supply is not as large as it used to be, to what do you attribute that?—I could not say, except that perhaps the demand is larger, I daresay you know the statistics better than I do, a great many more people go to Ireland now than twenty-five years ago to buy horses.

11118. Why do they go to Ireland?—Because I think they find the best there; thirty years ago we could go and stop in Dublin and buy twenty or thirty hunters in three days within a radius of eighteen or twenty miles of Dublin and buy them at five or six years old, you cannot do it now.

11119. You have to buy four year olds?—I gave up hunter dealing only because I could not buy the horses at a price that would pay to bring them over here, and make a living out of them.

11120. Do you think a mixture of Hackney blood would have any effect on hunter-breeding in Ireland?—I think it would.

11121. A good effect?—The worst. There (produced) is a letter I have this morning from a man in Ireland.

11122. Do you think the mixture of Hackney blood in the pedigree of the hunter would be perceptible to the eye?—I cannot say. It may or may not.

11123. We have a better chance of detecting the mixture of Clydesdale or Shire blood?—Yes; I should think you would.

11124. Lord Ashtown.—When you used to buy in Yorkshire, what class of horses used you to buy, the Cleveland Bay or coach horse?—Yes.

11125. They don't breed as many of those now?—Not half so much.

11126. Do you find many horses docked that would have been good enough for you if they had not been docked?—Yes; I rejected twenty or thirty this last year because they were docked.

11127. The fact of docking besides giving up the breeding of Cleveland Bays also tells against them?—Yes.

11128. Mr. Wrench.—You buy about 300 horses in the year altogether?—Yes.

11129. How many of these do you think come from Ireland?—I should think 180 to 200.

11130. You buy them chiefly from dealers who buy them in the South and North, and they practically feed them and sell them to you as long tails at four years old?—Yes.

11131. I don't want you to answer any question that would do your trade any harm. Would you say the price you give as an average?—£90 or £100 apiece.

11132. Do you know whether any of the horses you buy are American horses brought over and fed in Ireland?—I should not think they were.

11133. You are not aware of having bought any American horses in Ireland?—Not in Ireland.

11134. But you do buy them when landed over in this country?—Yes, sir.

11135. When you buy those horses, do you make inquiries as to how they are bred?—Yes.

11136. And do you think you get correct pedigrees. Don't you find, for instance, that a great many are got by some particular horse noted for getting harness horses, like "Mackintosh"?—I don't think so. I think we get them pretty straight as a rule.

11137. But you only get the pedigrees from these men who buy them from the farmers?—Yes.

11138. Do you think the superiority of the Irish horse is from their thoroughbred blood, or the way they are brought up—the soil and climate of Ireland?—Both.

11139. Do you object to cart blood in your horses?—Yes.

11140. Do you know that there are a great many cart horses in Ireland?—No; I was not aware of that.

11141. What is your opinion as to the number of stallions in Ireland. Did you think they were chiefly thoroughbred?—I should have thought so.

11142. And that is why you think buying from there is so safe?—Yes.

11143. Do you know anything of the trade outside your own trade in Ireland, the lower class trade?—No; I don't.

11144. You don't know the class of men who breed these horses you buy?—No; except the men that I have seen at fairs with the horses.

11145. But you don't often go to fairs now. You chiefly buy from these private people?—Chiefly.

11146. When you come to Ireland you go round to four or five of your friends in different parts of the country and look at the horses they have reared for you?—Yes, sir.

11147. And very often buy twenty or thirty from one man?—Yes.

11148. Have you any acquaintance with the rest of Ireland?—Not much.

11149. The men that you buy from are dealers. Their chief business is in the hunter trade really?—No; I think they buy a great many colts.

11150. At this time of the year they are selling harness horses, but as a rule they sell more hunters than harness horses?—I don't think so.

11151. Then there is as big a trade in harness horses as in hunters?—I think so.

11152. Do you buy a lighter class of horse now than you used to three or four years ago. Do you find the carriages getting lighter?—They were lighter two or three years ago, but now they are getting heavier again. Nearly all the carriages are made to go with C springs, and we find we must get our horses bigger.

11153. Then what size do you wish to buy?—Not less than 15.3.

11154. You buy them as low as 15.3?—Yes.

11155. And you never buy docked horses?—Occasionally we do. We might buy a horse that was docked, but he might have a good fair tail at the same time.

11156. You have not been in the West of Ireland at all?—No.

11157. You don't know what the poor farmers do there?—No.

11158. You would not recommend anything for them?—No. I don't know that part of the business at all.

11159. Why do you think they have given up breeding the class of horses that you look for in Yorkshire?—I think because so many of them have taken to breed Hackneys.

11160. Yes, but I mean why do they breed Hackneys?—I suppose they think it will pay them better.

11161. Are they a fairly intelligent people in Yorkshire?—I should think they are.

11162. Then you think if they have adopted this they have done it with some good reason?—I should think so, they are the best judges of that.

11163. And I think you said the supply of the horse you want is not as good as it used to be, can you explain that?—I cannot, except that perhaps the demand is greater. I don't know whether there are as many horses bred in Ireland as twenty years ago, but they are harder to get I know.

11164. Have you bought American horses for many years?—Oh yes, for a great many years. One of the Mr. Easts was over there fifteen years ago, and sent horses over. Then they gave them up.

11165. Are American horses coming over in large numbers?—Very large numbers.

11166. Do you think the American horse is improved to what he was five years ago?—I could not tell you. I did not see many American horses five years ago.

11167. Are there good horses among them now?—Yes, a few.

11168. And you can buy them at an age?—Yes, five or six years old and broke to harness, that is the advantage.

11169. Perfectly trained?—Not perfectly trained, but you can get them into work in four or five months.

11170. Do you think the American trade is cutting off a good deal of the trade that might be kept in this country?—Certainly.

11171. It is doing harm to the home breeders?—Yes.

11172. Can you suggest any remedy to help the breeders?—Unless you can stop them coming.

11173. Would you be in favour of marking American horses?—I think if they were branded they would not be so saleable.

11174. Would you yourself object to buying branded horses?—Yes.

11175. And supposing as a measure of use to breeders branding was suggested, would you as a large buyer, be against it?—It might prevent us buying some.

11176. But you would be patriotic enough to support it for the sake of the home breeder?—I don't know about that.

11177. CHAIRMAN.—It would not make any difference to you as a buyer if all the American horses were branded, for other buyers would be in the same position?—It would not matter if they branded them on their feet, but if they branded them on their sides and quarters it would make a difference, because there are a great number of German horses and other horses that came branded, and people would not look at them.

11178. Would it make any difference to you if all the foreign horses were excluded?—It would make the other horses dearer.

11179. You would pay more for them and would ask more for them?—I suppose that would be the result.

11180. But it would make no difference to you individually as against any other man in the same business?—We would be all the same, I suppose.

11181. You used to buy at one time a good many hunters in Ireland?—Yes.

11182. I think you said you could formerly get twenty good hunters within a short distance of Dublin, and that you cannot now?—No.

11183. How do you account for that?—They are more sought after. Hundreds more people go to Ireland to buy horses now than twenty-five years ago. Ever since the Dublin Show started horses have gone up very much in price.

11184. Could you say that the breeding of the hunters and the carriage horses you buy is an important part of the industry of Ireland?—I should think very great.

11185. Would you say it is the most important?—I should think it is.

11186. Would you say that anything that was to be done to keep the industry as an industry in Ireland should be directed to the production of that kind of animal?—Yes, my lord, certainly. I think the mares are the great thing, if we could only get the farmers to keep the better mares, that is where the failing is, I think. If you could hold out some inducement to get them to keep a better class of mares, you would get better horses.

11187. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do yot suggest any means for doing that?—The only thing is to give them prizes at agricultural shows, buy mares for them, let them have them and keep them. I think what the Duke of Portland is doing at the present moment is a very good thing.

11188. CHAIRMAN.—Would you agree with me that Ireland has achieved a certain amount of pre-eminence in the production of high-class hunters?—Oh, yes, my lord, no doubt about that. I don't know any other country you can go to where you can get the same.

11189. How do you account for that?—There is a great deal in the soil. The country is better adapted for breeding horses than any other I have ever heard of or know of.

11190. And that would apply equally to breeding any kind of horse?—I think so. What makes bone for one must make it for another I think.

11191. Have you much experience of Hackneys in England?—No, I have not. I know very little about them.

11192. And if the production was largely increased in Ireland of the kind of horses you buy, do you think there would be still a demand for them? Could you dispose of a great many more if you could get them?—We should buy more there if we could get them instead of buying horses from other countries.

11193. Lord RATHDONNELL.—With regard to mares, it has been stated here to-day that a mare sired by a Hackney would produce a hunter if put to a thoroughbred. Would you like that crossing?—It would depend a good deal on the animal how much action it had.

11194. Do you think it would produce a hunter?—I don't think so, if it was a very fine goer. I should not pick out a Hackney mare as a dam for a hunter.

11195. Perhaps you don't understand quite what I mean. If you put a Hackney sire on to what they call a weedy, well-bred mare in Ireland, and cross the produce of that with a thoroughbred horse again, do you think that would be good crossing for hunting purposes?—I don't think it would be so good as having a regular hunting mare, three-quarters bred, without the Hackney cross.

11196. Perhaps you would be able to tell us something with regard to the ages at which mares are taken out of Ireland. Are not good sound mares taken out at a very early age?—I should think four-year-old and three-year-olds, a great many of them.

11197. Do you think it would be likely that a dealer would buy a two-year-old mare that was stinted or a three-year-old mare that was stinted, or had a foal at foot?—I could not tell you, it would just depend upon what his trade was. I should not have thought any ordinary horse-dealer would have bought one as young as that.

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Mr. Henry Newman.

11198. Under one of the Royal Dublin Society's schemes prizes are given to mares that are stinted, or have a foal at foot at those ages. You don't think that a dealer would take away one of them?—I should not have thought so at that age.

11199. Do you think that would be a good way of managing to keep the sound mares in the country?—It might. I could not say. It is not the class of trade I am acquainted with.

11200. Mr. WRENCH.—You said that you considered the hunter trade most important. Do you mean in value or in number? Have you ever worked out the numbers? Do you know the number of hunters that come here from Ireland every year?—No.

11201. But you think it might produce a good horse of any kind?—Yes.

11202. Therefore there might be a trade to produce harness horses which it does not produce now?—Yes.

11203. Is there a large trade, below yours, in horses with action to ride and drive in lighter carriages, horses from 15.2 to 15.3?—There are a great number of that size used no doubt.

11204. Is there any falling off in the demand for that class of horses?—I don't think so. I think there are plenty of those horses about. I think the smaller horses are easier to get than the bigger ones.

11205. But there is a demand for them, a fair trade?—I think so.

11206. In these horses is action a desirable paying quality?—No doubt about it.

11207. It is a thing that sells a horse quicker than anything else?—Yes.

11208. When you are talking about breeding hunters with a mare put to a Hackney stallion, and then crossed again with a thoroughbred, would you consider the Hackney cross the worst, or a cart-horse cross in that mare?—I should think the cart-horse would be the worst cross. I should put the Hackney before the cart-horse.

11209. You like the Hackney better than the Clydesdale?—Yes.

Professor Pritchard.

Professor PRITCHARD examined.

11210. CHAIRMAN.—You are a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons?—Yes, my lord.

11211. Have you a professional experience of Hackneys?—Yes, a very large one.

11212. Have you any information you could give the Commission as to their characteristics, soundness, formation, and so on?—My opinion is that they are particularly sound, compared with thoroughbred horses or cart-horses, I think they are sounder, their joints are particularly clear from disease, particularly of a bony character. Of course my experience has been more particularly with these that have come into the show ring, and been to some extent selected before they came under my notice. Still I have had experience of them to some considerable extent in farm-yards, and that is the impression that I have obtained that they are perfectly free from disease.

11213. Would it be correct to say that in both the case of the cart-horse and the thoroughbred, the probability is that the animals you have seen or that have been shown have gone through any description of work that would tend to make them unsound to a greater degree than the Hackneys?—With regard to the thoroughbred horse there is no question that that would apply because he is put to excessive work very early in life, and the powers of nature are called upon to a very considerable extent, but that does not apply to the cart-horse.

11214. And to what do you attribute the comparative unsoundness of the cart-horse?—Hereditary predisposition.

11215. But after all, hereditary disease must have originated in something?—Oh, yes; unquestionably, and I think it has originated in the cart-horse from careless breeding, years back.

11216. Have you long experience of Hackneys?—Twenty-five years.

11217. And what is called a Hackney now, is it much the same as its progenitors twenty-five years ago?—It has been very very much improved upon no doubt.

11218. Improved in action or what?—Both in make and shape, and action.

11219. By careful breeding?—Yes, selection.

11220. Have you any opinion or any knowledge as to the commercial value of the Hackneys, I don't mean Hackney stallions of course, but an ordinary driving or riding horse?—Well, I know this that they are fetching very much more money at the present day than they did years back, but beyond that I don't think I could give you anything definite.

11221. Have you got any opinion as to the relation of the bone of the thoroughbred and the Hackney, either as to size or density?—I have long held an opinion that the quality of the bone has as much to do as the quantity in the value of it.

11222. How do they compare as to quality?—The quality of the bone certainly is better in the thoroughbred than in the Hackney.

11223. And as to quantity, the measurement?—As a rule, I should say, the Hackney would measure more than the thoroughbred.

11224. Do you mean measuring round the bone itself or round the leg?—That is the way it is usually measured round the leg, below the knee.

11225. But then that measurement would depend on more than the absolute size of the bone?—I don't think so, my lord.

11226. If the covering of the bone was larger and thicker in one case than the other that would affect it, you measured the leg, skin, and hair?—Quite so, but we don't find the difference in the size of the ligaments and tendons that we find in the bone, therefore, if the leg measures large it is more to be attributed to the bone than to the ligaments and tendons.

11227. I take it that the bone is superior in size in the Hackney, and the quality is superior in the thoroughbred?—That is so.

11228. Could you say whether they balance each other in that respect, or is the difference in favour of the Hackney or thoroughbred?—I should say in favour of the thoroughbred.

11229. Lord RATHDONNELL.—With regard to breeding, it has been stated by a breeder of Hackneys that action is the first thing to be considered in preference to formation, do you think this sound?—If the action is all round, as is commonly expressed, I should prefer that to the formation, but if the action is confined to simply fore action then I should prefer the formation to the action.

11230. Do you think that, taking the Hackneys all round as a type of horses, that they are apt to be calf-kneed?—I have not noticed that; I should say that is not so.

11231. Have you ever noticed any inclination to short back ribs in the Hackney type?—No, I cannot say that I have.

11232. In general have they strong thighs?—They have, and good hocks.

11233. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say the Hackney horse has improved both in conformation and action in twenty-five years. In what points of conformation has he improved?—I think his limbs, his arms, and thighs are better than they used to be.

11234. Has he improved in his shoulders?—I cannot say that I have noticed that particularly.

11235. I take it that the Hackney horse is descended from an old riding horse that used to exist

in Yorkshire?—He came from Norfolk and Yorkshire.

11236. Chiefly used for saddle purposes?—Yes.

11237. Do you think the modern Hackney is of a saddle type?—No, I do not; I think he is more of a harness horse.

11238. Then it is a matter of question whether he has improved or whether you value a harness horse higher than a riding horse?—It is a question which article you want. I think he is a better looking harness horse than he was a long while ago.

11239. But it is a question whether it is an improvement to turn a riding horse into a harness horse?—It is a matter of opinion.

11240. At any rate his type has changed to some extent from this selected breed?—I think so; I think he has improved very much in his arms and thighs.

11241. Not in his shoulders?—Not in his shoulders, but in his quarters he has.

11242. Mr. WRENCH.—We have had it stated in evidence before us, Professor Pritchard, that Hackneys were specially liable to curbs and curby hocks. Is that your experience?—No, the reverse of that.

11243. Which would you say had the soundest hocks as a rule, a Hackney or a thoroughbred?—I should say a Hackney.

11244. And his hocks are not of a formation that is more objectionable than curbs?—Predisposition to curbs, certainly not.

11245. You have had a very large experience in examining horses, both at the shows and at horse breeders' own places for a great number of years?—Yes.

11246. A great number have come under your observation?—Yes, many thousands.

11247. Do you think a Hackney is a horse of a delicate constitution or the reverse?—The reverse, decidedly.

11248. Have you ever attended Hackneys in illness?—Yes; but most frequently when shown under circumstances calculated to give rise to illness.

11249. It has been also stated to us that they are of a delicate constitution, and have not the same power to recover from illness as a thoroughbred horse, do you agree with that?—I think not.

11250. You think they have the same recuperative powers?—I think so.

11251. Have the Hackneys been carefully bred for a long period now?—Unquestionably.

11252. When you first went among the Norfolk and Yorkshire farmers did you find they were working their Hackneys more than they do now?—I could not give an answer to that question; I am not aware.

11253. Have you formed any opinion as to why they are not worked now?—I think they are more kept for show purposes; that probably is the reason. The majority of the best Hackneys are kept for show purposes or for sale, and therefore they would not be worked to any great extent beyond strong exercise. I have one myself that I have driven thirteen years now. She is in the Stud Book, and she has never been ill.

11254. Do you find that she is soft or unable to do a journey?—She is a little too hard for me sometimes.

11255. Is it your experience that they are a soft blood or the reverse?—The reverse I should say.

11256. You would say they still possess staying powers?—On that point I should like to say—— Well, my own experience of them is that they have staying powers, but from what I have heard people say there are many of them, after going a distance, tire.

11257. But you have no experience of that?—I have no experience of that.

11258. Is that confined to special strains?—That I could not answer.

11259. Do you know at all why Yorkshire men have given up breeding coach-horses and taken to Hackneys in preference?—I think it is a matter of pounds, shillings and pence.

11260. Do you, know as a matter of fact, the Yorkshire men have made a great deal of money lately by breeding Hackneys?—I think there is no doubt about it.

11261. Then you were asked as to the riding and harness trade—which trade do you think is the most certain for a farmer to attempt to breed?—I should select the harness most if I were going to supply the market.

11262. And you think that would be the wisest trade for small farmers to breed who had only indifferent mares?—I do, indeed.

11263. And their action is the essential point?—Yes.

11264. Do you know whether the Hackneys have a shorter cannon bone than a thoroughbred?—I should think there is not much difference, taking a number of them, I should not think there is much difference relatively to the height.

11265. And you have never made any experiments to test the length or slope of the Hackney's shoulders compared with the thoroughbred?—Only by vision.

11266. CHAIRMAN.—When you say you think that breeding for harness purposes would be the most profitable thing for a farmer to do—what part of the country do you allude to?—London, of course.

11267. But I mean for breeders?—Well, of course, the breeder would sell to the dealer who brings the horse to London. There is always more demand than supply in London for harness horses.

11268. We are talking of what is the most profitable thing for a farmer to turn his attention to—do you mean that universally all over the United Kingdom it would be better for him to turn his attention to harness purposes, or are you speaking of a particular locality?—Oh, no; I am speaking of the whole kingdom throughout.

11269. Do you know Ireland at all?—I cannot say I know Ireland. I have been there many times, but it has always been flying visits. I have been to Dublin Show officially, and I have been through Ireland for pleasure, but I don't know Ireland.

11270. Are we to understand that, for instance, in Meath, Limerick, Cork, and other counties, you think it would be more profitable for the farmers to turn their attention to breeding for harness purposes than to breeding for hunters?—I should think if I were in Ireland, certainly.

11271. Anything you would like to say to the Commission?—No, my lord, I don't know that there is; but I should rather lay stress on one answer I gave with regard to the tendency to curbs in the Hackney's hock. I don't think that is so at all; I am sure it is not.

Lord RATHDONNELL in the chair, in the absence of the Earl of DUNRAVEN.

Mr. JOHN MAJOR examined.

11272. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Sledmore Grange, Yorkshire, and have bred Hackneys for some years?—Yes, sir.

11273. And you also judge at shows?—Yes, sir. And with your permission, if it is not out of place, I propose to read my evidence. I must ask, Mr. Chairman, to base my evidence on the courage, staying powers, and durability of the Hackney, and in doing

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so I must go back to the time when I first took in hand my late father's first Hackney show mare, being then a youth of nineteen or twenty. This mare was a daughter of Beal's "Sir Charles" by Taylor's "Performer," and was sold to a nephew in London when four years old.

11274. Is this a statement of how you have bred your Hackneys?—Yes; this old mare was the ancient stock.

11275. Do you not think it would be better to hand that in, or does it refer to anything at the present day?—We still retain the same breed, and I was going to show the durability and the staying powers. She came to London when four years old, and he constantly rode and drove her on London stones until she was fourteen, when she was brought back, rested three months, and made up for showing in both saddle and harness. The first four years she never was beaten, and won during that time about sixty first prizes, when age alone forced her to take a back seat. It was always easy to hear from the public when a riding or driving class had just entered the ring: "Wait till Major's 'Polly' comes on the scene, with her fourteen-year-old legs and feet from the London stones; she'll soon polish the lot;" and so she did. This statement can be verified by scores of Yorkshire breeders still living that witnessed so many of her fine exhibitions, showing style and action in all her paces, as well as a perfect model in shape. She was then put to the stud, and won the Great Yorks at York, in 1866 or 1867, as a Hackney brood mare with foal at foot; that same foal, three years later, winning the first prize for the best Hackney stallion under fifteen hands at the June Show at the Agricultural Hall in London. I also exhibited at the same Yorkshire show, as a three-year-old mare, "Miss Giles," recorded in Vol. I. She also took first prize in her class, and was sold the spring following to a partner in the Harford and Bristol Brass Company, Dowgate, London, when she was rising five. This gentleman drove her, along with a blood one, from London to York in three days, when the blood mare broke down. Mr. Stead, the gentleman's name, hired a gig and drove "Miss Giles" in single to Scarborough the fourth day, stayed a week, drove her back to York, bought another hunter at Walker's, and reached London again in three more days, when he wrote and told me "Miss Giles" had given him the greatest pleasure in his over 400 miles' drive, and was as fresh as paint, with legs as clean as glass, after rendering her two stable companions perfectly useless. This gentleman afterwards made us a present of the mare, when a good lot worn; and we fortunately stuck to her strain in breeding such horses as Mr. Smith's "Satisfaction," Mr. Mark Pearson's "The Major," and others, which have done more to pay a landlord his rent the last twelve or fourteen years than all the corn-growing put together. I have letters from friends, which I shall be pleased to submit, bearing out my own statement as to the endurance of a good-bred Hackney. I don't object at all having a cross of blood in the third or fourth dam, nor do I think Hackney breeding has at all interfered with hunter breeding, only in cases where the hunter breeder has noticed the Hackney breeder beating his head off in selling his produce; hence a good many discarded hunter breeding for the Hackney, and I find are sticking to it yet. I don't think for one moment that all the cycles and motor cars in the world, after the novelty is gone, will ever cause our English gentry, or their sons and daughters, to turn their backs on a beautiful typical riding or driving horse, such as we Yorkshiremen keep trying to produce, not only because we admire them so much, but also I take them to be a great safety-valve towards keeping at a distance that man who, once he enters your doors, puts his mark on all you have and refuses you to choose your own auctioneer. To save which I shall go on trying to produce a nice Hackney, and would advise Ireland to do the same.

11276. I take it your experience has been chiefly in connection with pure-bred Hackneys?—We try to keep them as pure as possible.

11277. Do you consider that Hackney stallions are suitable animals to cross with common inferior mares?—May I ask what class of mares?

11278. The ordinary common mares?—Oh, yes, you very often get good harness horses, very good selling horses.

11279. In your part of Yorkshire has the hunter breeding decreased?—Yes, I believe it has.

11280. To what do you attribute that?—We keep such a superior Hackney now that we find so much more ready a sale for it, not matured like the hunter, the hunter has to belong to a gentleman that can ride it and make it before it is remunerative.

11281. You get a readier sale for your Hackney?—I have always found it so.

11282. Is there a demand in your country for horses got by a Hackney stallion?—Yes, sir.

11283. That is from half-bred mares or ordinary mares?—Yes, where the cross is producing a good harness horse.

11284. Do you think that the crossing of the Hackney has had any effect on the breed of hunters in your district?—I scarcely know how to answer that question, I have seen some very beautiful horses by a Hackney sire out of a common mare, but I have no experience of hunter-breeding.

11285. You don't know whether they have proved themselves good in the field afterwards?—A good many of our Hackneys at the present day are as good hunters as ever went into the field.

11286. Are there many Cleveland Bays and Yorkshire coach horses bred in your country?—Very few indeed, it is very rare I see one.

11287. I take it from what you have said that you think the Hackney is a stout good horse?—Yes, I do.

11288. Well, now, as regards his delicacy, do you think he is a delicate horse at all or the reverse?—The reverse, quite, with the beautiful shapes we have got in our Hackneys now they cannot possibly be delicate.

11289. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say you never did breed hunters?—Only an odd one now and again.

11290. Therefore your experience in horse-breeding seems to be almost entirely confined to Hackney breeding of a high class?—Yes, I try to keep them as high-class as possible, I breed nothing else except cart-horses for my own farm work.

11291. Then you have had no experience of half-bred stallions and Hackneys of a less good type?—Oh, yes, I have.

11292. What have you found with regard to them?—I found this that it behoved me to stick as much as possible to the best class of Hackney I could get because I could command about treble the amount of money for it, a commoner bred Hackney generally goes for harness purposes.

11293. Then the high class Hackney goes only for show purposes?—No, I did not say show purposes, but for riding purposes. We go in to get the pattern riding shoulders, giving beautiful depth of girth and placing its rider and saddle in the proper position where he can sit without riding on its forelegs and plenty of room for the heart to beat.

11294. Do you ride your best Hackneys yourself?—Oh, yes, and drive them too occasionally. We always take it we can drive a Hackney when we like, but we cannot always make a Hackney a riding horse.

11295. But as for the worst class of Hackneys do you find there is a good sale for them too?—Oh, yes, they can be sold favourably with other classes of horses, not of the best stamp, you know.

11296. They are easy to sell?—Yes.

11297. On your farm do you work Hackneys?—Very often. We are very careful with them; we often make them perfectly gentle to either ride or drive by light ploughing for three or four hours at a time. We don't go in for killing them.

11298. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know how the Hackneys were originally bred; I mean in the early part of the century did you learn from your father the animals they were descended from?—My father used to tax my memory as to whether I ever remembered a horse called Merrylegs, but when I got at the date of Merrylegs I found I was only a little boy two or three years old, so I could not remember him. He wanted me to remember him and fix it in my memory and carry it in my eye so as to remember it when I was going about to buy, to keep that type in my eye so that I should never go far wrong.

11299. What were the old nags used for in former days, riding or driving?—They did both, but there was a deal more riding then than there is at the present day.

11300. Did they do long distances?—Very long indeed.

11301. And are the Hackneys at the present day bred from the animals that did the long distances?—Yes.

11302. In a great many of the best strains of Yorkshire Hackneys there are a good many crosses of thoroughbred blood?—Not a great many. I know several that have a cross of blood in the third and fourth dam.

11303. That is what I mean; that was common in the Yorkshire Hackneys?—Yes, the people rather advocated it.

11304. Why have the Yorkshire farmers given up breeding the big class of horses that Messrs. East look for?—Well, there is a good many like myself. We have found that the Hackney paid us so much better, and it was a question of pounds, shillings, and pence as well as having a fancy for the Hackney.

11305. Then the real reason that Hackneys are bred so much in Yorkshire now is because they pay?—Quite so.

11306. And if the Yorkshire men found the coach-horse or hunters paid better they would turn back to them?—In a moment.

11307. They have no prejudice when their pockets are concerned?—Certainly not.

11308. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Would it be easy to get the mares now if they desired to turn back to the large well-bred thoroughbred; would it be very easy for them in East Yorkshire to breed them now?—Yes.

11309. Where would they go to get them?—I for one would be happy indeed to put three or four on the market to-morrow.

11310. I mean these larger mares that Mr. Newman was talking about that he says he cannot find now in the East Riding of Yorkshire, you say they do exist?—I beg your pardon, I mean the Hackney mares.

11311. Mr. WRENCH.—When you are not breeding absolutely pure Hackneys, with what class of mares do you think that a Hackney stallion produces the best result?—Well, I have had very little experience of that class of breeding. I have had a few half-bred mares sometimes that have bred beautiful horses to a Hackney stallion.

11312. But with thoroughbred blood in them?—Yes, two crosses of blood perhaps.

11313. Have you tried any experiments, breeding from the same mare with a thoroughbred horse and then with a Hackney stallion; have you any opinion as to the different results from the same mare?—No; I have tried sometimes a thoroughbred stallion with a Hackney mare.

11314. What was the result?—It soon cured me.

11315. And can you explain at all why it is that Yorkshire farmers don't work these Hackneys at the present day as much as they used to?—I don't know that I am able to explain it.

11316. Is it because they have become more valuable?—Our best mares, we put rather a great value on them, and we try as much as possible to take care of them, and put them to a little light field work. I never allow one of mine to go, or I send my son with it.

11317. Then they are so valuable it pays you to use them as nothing except brood mares?—Yes, sir.

11318. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said that the Hackneys you have are pure-bred Hackneys?—Yes, sir.

11319. Are they all entered in the Stud Book?—Yes, sir.

11320. Can you tell us when that Stud Book was formed?—I believe it is fourteen or fifteen years ago. I am not certain to the year. I became a member the first year.

11321. Do you know whether the Stud Book is closed or not?—It is partly closed.

11322. It is not closed altogether?—I have been on the Hackney Council now for three years, and every time I sat at our meetings we have used the very greatest and utmost care we possibly could that we should have three pedigrees. There is no doubt in the first formation of the Hackney Society there were some very imperfect pedigrees introduced into the book, that is, at the commencement.

11323. Is there any other way of getting a nominal entry in the Stud Book besides actual pedigree?—You cannot get an animal in the Stud Book now unless its sire and dam are both already registered, it is so far closed as that.

11324. There is no case of inspection?—There is no case of inspection now only for pony mares. The book is just closing now altogether for pony stallions. The pony mares are left open for inspection, the same as for the last three or four years—that is, the ponies not to exceed 14 hands and not to be under four years old.

11325. What other qualifications have they to have?—I suppose nothing but their pedigrees. As far as inspection goes my instructions have been when I was sent to inspect ponies to take the type and the age. We look upon a pony having the same Hackney type as our 15.1 or 15.2 Hackneys.

11326. What amount of pedigree must they have to get in?—I am sure I could not answer you that question just now.

11327. But when you go on your tour of inspection for passing these animals don't you send some report with them?—Yes. I have already said I give the type, the shape of the animal, its age as correct and its height correct, and my inspection is always attended by a veterinary surgeon, inspecting as well as myself. He reports on the general soundness of the animal.

11328. As to pedigree, how do you enter that in the Stud Book. I believe the inspection is where you cannot get at the true pedigree of the animal?—Certainly.

11329. Therefore you enter animals that do not go very far back?—In the pony mare classes.

11330. But the same thing was done, was it not, in the larger classes?—It was, sir.

11331. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Would the produce of one of these selected pony mares by a registered Hackney stallion be eligible for admission into the Hackney Stud Book?—Yes; in a certain sense. They go in as inspected mares. There are three grades before they get a full register.

11332. As a matter of fact, the mare, as you say, that is put into the Pony Stud Book is practically in the Hackney Stud Book?—Yes, and called a pony.

11333. Mr. WRENCH.—But it is in the pony part of the Stud Book?—Yes. If it should appear in the Hackney Stud Book the owner that is registered is asked if he will write the word "pony."

11334. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—These ponies are 14 hands. They are not to exceed 14 hands; but a 14 hands pony mare may be put to a registered Hackney stallion of 15.2. The produce might be 15 hands high?—Very easily.

11335. Would that produce be eligible for admission into the Hackney Stud Book?—I believe they

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would take it in and call it "entered," before that it is by "inspection."

11336. CHAIRMAN.—Then the produce of that again?—It would get full registry, provided the sires that had been used in the different crosses were registered horses.

11337. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—So it is really the fact that an animal can get into the Stud Book even now through the pony classes through an inspection at the present moment?—I don't see what is to hinder, if you go on raising a sire that you feel certain will increase the height by nearly a hand.

11338. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You said you got some very good animals on one or two occasions by a Hackney stallion out of a blood mare. What sort were they?—Chiefly driving. If you get the action and the breeding that way out of a blood mare, you very often have a very saleable animal as a harness horse.

11339. You would not advocate a Hackney stallion with a blood mare for riding horses?—They might do. They would get both classes of horses according to the stamina of the mare.

11340. But you prefer a thoroughbred horse to get a riding horse out of a well bred mare?—Oh! no, sir, I would prefer a Hackney.

Mr. George Gale.

Mr. GEORGE GALE, Atwick Hall, Seaton, Hull, examined.

11341. CHAIRMAN.—You are a large purchaser of horses, and I think have tried various experiments in breeding, have you not?—Yes.

11342. Would you give the Commission an account of the various experiments you made, and the crosses you tried?—I think if I commence at the commencement of my career as horse breeder, forty-five years ago, I commence from a mare by Philip Ramsdale's "Old Phenomenon," out of a blood mare. That was the first Hackney sire, and the produce of that was the best hunter I ever crossed in my life. Since then I have bred from that mare and from her offspring by a Hackney stallion, and crossed again with blood. I have had some extraordinary good hunters, in fact I have two now that I am hunting by "Southampton," out of a mare by "Tallyho," and they go back to Hackney blood.

11343. I take it from that that you think the Hackney strain does not damage hunter-breeding?—I think in one cross you could get so much better propelling and jumping power.

11344. Mr. WRENCH.—"Southampton," of course, was a thoroughbred?—Yes; he is by "Hermit."

11345. CHAIRMAN.—But I am right in supposing you think the Hackney cross is not prejudicial to hunters?—I rather prefer the Hackney cross to a cart horse. I would much rather breed from a Hackney mare, and put a blood horse across her to produce a hunter.

11346. Are you acquainted with the horses bought in Ireland?—I am not. I have ridden an Irish hunter brought over from Ireland.

11347. What sort of horses are bred in your district chiefly?—There is nothing but mongrel bred ones by cart horses out of light mares. No one goes in particularly for breeding. The old coach horses are extinct. When I was a lad there were three or four farmers had the right kind of coaching brood mares, but they are all extinct now. Cannot be found.

11348. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You began, you say, forty-five years ago with these Hackneys?—Yes.

11349. In those days, the Hackney, I think, was a riding horse. He was called, I think, a roadster?—In some cases, yes.

11350. And you yourself have tried to keep up that type of animal, to keep the Hackney as a riding horse?—Quite so.

11351. But you would not quite say that the Hackneys that you see in the shows in the north of England are riding horses now?—I consider very many of these are harness horses, and horses I would not use on any consideration as sires.

11352. You would not like to ride?—You could not ride them and I would not use them for getting riding horses.

11353. Therefore the type of Hackney of the present day is not at all the same type as he was when you began to breed forty-five years ago?—The best type, the riding horse, there are a few of them, but these are so grown out, I don't know how it is, that I have always gone in for riding horses with good shoulders and good hind action, and that is the way you will get the propelling powers for getting hunters. I may say I rode a mare with three crosses of Hackney blood, one of the finest jumpers I ever crossed in my life, with staying power, a little mare fifteen hands.

11354. I imagine from what you say that there is a considerable difference now between the Hackney that you bred and the type of Hackney that we see in the show-yards in Yorkshire, you bred a riding horse?—I won't use a horse that I think is not like getting a riding horse with beautiful even-balanced action, and flexes the hock, I like one that you can ride for fifty miles with ease, and fifty more if you wish.

11355. That would not apply to those extravagantly high-actioned horses that you see in the shows?—Certainly not.

11356. So that when you advocate the best class of Hackney animals, you are speaking of the class you breed yourself, not of the class you see in the show-yards?—Not the majority of them, a great number of them are not riding-horses; you cannot put a saddle on them, it goes on the neck. I had an old Hackney mare, 14.3, I could always tell her walk if there had been a thousand horses pass, if I could not see her I could tell her by the peculiar sound of her feet.

11357. LORD ASHTOWN.—This horse you are talking about by "Southampton" would he be in the Hackney Stud Book?—No, I have taken two or three prizes with him in the hunter class, his dam was by "Tallyho," out of a mare by "Knapp," and "Knapp" was by "Sheppard F. Knapp."

11358. MR. FITZWILLIAM.—An American horse, is that mare in the Hackney Stud Book?—Oh, no, she is not eligible. I rode a mare by "Kipsea Performer" out of a van mare, and she was as fine a huntress as a man could cross, a good jumper with staying power.

11359. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—Do you think the present Hackney with his conformation is a desirable cross for riding purposes?—I don't approve of them myself, as an instance of that, I think yesterday in the Champion Cup class one horse was a perfect model of a riding horse, and the other if you cut him in two, the hind legs are five years old and the front is three, the age is the wrong way.

11360. Mr. WRENCH.—You live in a Hackney-breeding district?—I do.

11361. And you have been a hunting man all your life?—Yes.

11362. And hunt a good deal now?—Yes.

11363. Keep hunters and follow hounds—do you think that the Hackney bred in your district has done any harm to hunter-breeding?—I don't think so. I don't think it has interfered with it at all.

11364. You think it is possible to keep the two quite distinct?—Oh, yes.

11365. Is the Hackney a soft horse or a hardy horse?—I think the hardiest horse.

11366. Do you think he is a horse that can stay

long distances?—I am quite certain of that. I have tried it in my own case.

11367. You have had a good many cases—you cannot be mistaken?—I have got into the saddle at seven o'clock in the morning, and ridden twenty miles to a meet, and hunted all day, and ridden back in the evening not a bit the worse. I was riding a four-year-old mare the other day, we had a tremendous run over a very deep country, she was by a blood horse out of a Hackney mare, the whip asked me what I was riding, I said "a four-year-old mare." "You have not been riding that all day." "Yes, I have." "Well," said he, "I never saw anything like it; my second horse is tired." I rode her all day, and I ride fourteen stone.

11368. Do you know what the origin of these Hackneys is—were they bred from the old roadsters that the Yorkshire farmers used to ride long distances?—I have no doubt.

11369. Has much care been taken in the breeding of Hackneys?—Not until recently, fourteen or fifteen years ago. I remember the time of the old-fashioned nag horse, the old trotting horse.

11370. And did they ride them long distances then?—Very long distances; they were noted for their speed and durability.

11371. Why do you think the Yorkshire farmers have given up breeding coach-horses and taken to Hackneys?—Because the fashion changed, there were no people to buy coach horses twenty years ago, and they became extinct; now there is a demand, but the supply is not equal to the demand.

11372. Are there not plenty of good riding Hackneys still to be found in the best studs in Yorkshire?—Oh, yes.

11373. Horses you would consider of a good riding type?—Yes.

11374. Descended from these old roadsters?—Quite so.

11375. Without any bad cross in them to spoil their riding shape?—I must admit the riding shape has been lost of late, because people have gone in for big horses to try to supply the foreign market; you cannot very well sell a horse to-day under 15·2, not an entire horse, for exportation, they will have them big—they are not riding horses.

11376. You think that the older stallions were smaller horses than that, the Ramsdale horses?—"Old Phenomenon" was not a very big horse, they came from Norfolk, there is more quality in the Yorkshire.

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Mr. George Gale.

11377. CHAIRMAN.—Do you call your own particular horses pure bred Hackneys?—Yes; I have some as good bred Hackneys as anybody.

11378. Are they entered in the Stud Book?—Oh, yes.

11379. It has been stated here that the first point to be considered in breeding Hackneys is action, and that the conformation is to be considered after that—is that the way you would think right to breed?—Yes, if you had not the riding action, it is no use having the conformation; you must have the action, that is the most essential point—after that get the beautiful riding shoulders.

11380. How are you going to get the riding shoulders, if you don't breed from an animal with good shoulders?—If you lose that it is for want of properly crossing.

11381. You think the crossing gives the shapes?—Oh, yes; in every animal—whatever it be, sheep or shorthorn, or whatever it is you want to cross them—if the dam is deficient in one point, try to get the sire good in that point.

11382. Is not that conformation—do you consider that before the action?—I consider the action is produced by getting the right conformation.

11383. How can action bring conformation, surely it is the conformation brings the action, unless you brought the action artificially—do you believe in that?—I think there is a great deal of artificial action

11384. Then if you saw an artificially-actioned horse, so to speak, you would look twice at his shoulders, if he was a stallion, before you would put a mare to him?—If I was judging one I would tell you what I should do; I would say, "You go four miles an hour and let his head loose, let him walk, and then put him into a slow trot of five miles an hour." That is the way to get at a riding horse's action.

11385. Without getting on his back?—Yes, it will tell you his movements; I think it is a great mistake in the show ring that horses are allowed to be shown as they are—it depends entirely on the man; if you have a man that can run fast and make a good shout, and bustle about, it is taken that the horse has action.

11386. Is there anything else you would like to state to the Commission?—No; I don't think there is anything further.

The Commission adjourned to next morning.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY.—FRIDAY, MARCH 5TH, 1897.

March 5, 1897.

Sitting at 12, Hanover-square, London, W.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P. (in the Chair); LORD ASHTOWN; MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, K.G.; MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P.; LORD RATHDONNELL; HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM; COLONEL ST. QUINTIN; MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE; MR. F. S. WRENCH.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE examined.

Mr. William Bainbridge.

11387. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Lancashire, do you not?—Yes, my lord.

11388. You are Secretary of the Lancashire Agricultural Society?—Yes.

11389. And do you deal in horses?—No.

11390. But you have experience of horses?—Yes; I do a large commission business, but I don't get any horses to buy and sell.

11391. What class of horses?—Shires, Hackneys, hunters.

11392. Both riding and driving horses?—Yes.

11393. Are you at all acquainted with Ireland?—I have been there a good deal.

11394. Buying horses?—Yes.

11395. Do you know the congested districts of the western seaboard?—I was there just once or twice; once for about a fortnight near Ballinrobe and Tourmakeady, and round about there.

11396. Are you able to give any opinion as to the class of mares that the farmers breed in these western districts?—Well, I was anxious to see them, and bought a few of their progeny whilst I was out there, seven or eight foals, one or two two or three-year-old mares; no broken horses. I did not find anything that was broken that I cared about, and I bought a few unbroken ones.

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Mr. William Bainbridge

11397. How are they bred?—Mostly by Mr. Mitchell's Hackney, and what were not by him I don't know how they were bred; it was evidently a local horse, and not a thoroughbred, and, therefore, I had no idea what the stamp of horse was. I did not make further inquiries, except that he was not a Hackney or a thoroughbred.

11398. How did those turn out?—Well; I turned them over to a man that was with me at the time. Only one mare I know of she was sold and did very well. She is now breeding.

11399. Was she by the Hackney?—She was by the Hackney called "Star of the West," that used formerly to stand in Tourmakeady.

11400. Do you think generally from what you saw that the class of mares there would be suitable to mate with a Hackney?—Quite so.

11401. To produce what?—To produce a good all-round saleable horse from 14 to 15 hands. I don't think the first cross would be likely to produce anything good enough for either harness or riding; but perhaps a good tradesman's horse.

11402. And if the best of the fillies were kept and crossed again they would probably be something of a better class?—Crossed again with a Hackney, yes.

11403. Would you prefer the Hackney to a sound suitable thoroughbred horse for that kind of mare?—I think a thoroughbred horse would be too much quality for the mares I saw round about Connemara and that neighbourhood.

11404. You would not expect much from the first cross?—I would not.

11405. But after a time you would think they would turn into a fairly saleable valuable description of horse?—I do.

11406. Do you consider those districts capable of producing hunters or high-class horses?—They have not size at present in the mares I have seen to produce either size or strength.

11407. Do you know Ireland pretty well generally?—Not the South of Ireland, except just flying visits to fairs.

11408. Then you probably would not be able to give us any information as to the question of the improvement of horse-breeding in Ireland generally?—I have bought a good many horses from the fairs in Ireland, but I have not been round about much amongst the farmers. I don't know much of the conditions under which they are raised. I only know the horses when they are raised and brought to a marketable place.

11409. We have had a certain amount of evidence to the effect that the Hackney is not a suitable sire, at any rate to get hunters, have you any opinion on that point?—I don't think he will ever be used for that purpose, will he?

11410. We have had some evidence also to the effect that the breeders in those portions of Ireland where the hunters are principally bred are afraid that the use of Hackneys in any part of the country, to a large extent, would result in the Hackney blood permeating gradually through the country and would interfere with the production of high-class hunters for which Ireland is rather celebrated, have you any opinion on that?—I don't think they need fear much. It depends solely on the selection of the Hackney that goes into Ireland.

11411. Have you seen the Hackneys of the Congested Districts Board?—I have.

11412. Have you any opinion about them?—Yes, on the whole they are very suitable for the country, and I think some of them would be very likely to get high-class saleable horses.

11413. Do you think the demand for what has been called the middle between the high-class carriage horse or hunter and the class of animal that goes in hack cars and things of that kind, do you think the demand for that sort of general utility horse is likely to increase or diminish?—I don't think there is likely to be any serious alteration in any way.

11414. There is a good demand for that class of animal now?—Certainly.

11415. You don't think other means of locomotion, bicycles and motor cars, are likely to interfere with it?—I don't think so.

11416. Do we gather from you that to produce that kind of animal might be profitable?—Yes.

11417. Do you know America at all, have you ever been there?—I was there last year but one.

11418. Are there many Hackney sires in America?—There are a few, but it is such a large country that they are considerably scattered.

11419. And do they breed generally pure bred Hackneys?—I made it my business more particularly to visit some of the Hackney studs there, and did not see much of the outlying districts where horses were simply travelling.

11420. To what use do they put the produce of the Hackney in America, riding or driving?—I believe they have not used them a sufficient length of time, scarcely to say, except in a few isolated cases. Men like Mr. Cassatt, of the Pennsylvania Railway, and Mr. Fairfax, of Virginia, and Mr. Webb have used them, but apart from those three men, I don't think many people have an opportunity of using them to any great extent, not the full pedigreed Hackney.

11421. Have you seen in Ireland any of the produce of the Congested Districts Board Hackneys?—I cannot say that I have, except what I have seen at the farm. I have not been in the congested districts. I have seen several that were bred from ponies from those districts. I understand that they are now at the Board's farm.

11422. Have you seen much of the produce of private Hackney stallions?—I have seen some of "Excelsior's" stock, and a great many of "Lord Rattler's." "Excelsior" is in the North, and "Lord Rattler" in Tourmakeady. A good many of the latter stock come over to England.

11423. To what purpose are they put?—Harness horses.

11424. What do you think of the produce which you have seen?—I think they are very good indeed.

11425. Do you think the Hackney strain would be easily detected in a mare in a generation or two, assuming, for the sake of argument, that it would be injudicious to introduce it into the parts of Ireland that breed hunters generally, do you think the average farmer would be able to detect it in a mare?—I think probably he would.

11426. So if they chose they could practically exclude it?—Yes, and if they chose they could go on with it.

11427 Lord Londonderry.—I think you told the Chairman you pass a good many horses through your hands every year, I suppose to sell?—Oh, no, I buy on commission, I don't buy any to trade on.

11428. What class of horse of the lot that go through your hands, do you think fetches the readiest market?—A horse with action.

11429. And you think that is contained in the Hackney more than any other class?—I think so in a greater proportion.

11430. You think they are more saleable in the English market than any of the other class of horses?—Yes.

11431. I think you said you bought some mares in the congested districts?—Yes, some foals and some young mares.

11432. What stamp of mare were they?—Just the first cross of the native pony.

11433. Crossed with what?—The Hackney "Star of the West" and "Lord Rattler." "Star of the West" was a Norfolk bred Hackney, "Lord Rattler" was by "Lord Derby II."

11434. Was "Star of the West" a good stamp of horse?—Yes, 15.3, a 16-stone horse.

11435. And it was the result of "Star of the West" crossed with these pony mares you got, what were they like?—Very straight on the legs and very saleable animals.

11436. So you saw a decided improvement in the first cross?—Yes.

11437. It is the second cross you say you are looking to with interest?—Yes.

11438. Have you seen any results of that?—I have seen one mare, three years old when I got her, she has had one foal to "Champion Ganymede," so she has a very good chance.

11439. It is a decided improvement on the dam?—Yes, the mare was a commonish mare, that is the mother.

11440. Then the second one is an improvement on that?—The second one is three years old and went about three miles across country, took the fences and everything.

11441. Was that well grown?—Yes.

11442. Have you sold that since?—It was sold immediately to Mr. Tom Mitchell and he sold her again, and she is breeding to "Champion Ganymede."

11443. What sort of price would he give for that animal?—Is that a fair question?

11444. No, take the average I mean?—That mare within six months of her coming to England just trebled herself, when she was trained and put into work she trebled her cost in six months.

11445. You have seen mares in the hunting counties in Ireland?—I have seen them at fairs.

11446. Have you been in the regular hunter breeding counties, Meath, Kildare, and Tipperary?—Yes, I have been at most of the fairs.

11447. You have seen the mares from which most of the good hunters are bred that are bought by English dealers?—No, I have not seen the mares.

11448. But you have seen the result of the mares?—Yes, generally kept one or two and ridden them.

11449. Have you ever had one that was got by a Hackney from a hunter mare?—No.

11450. All have been got by thoroughbred horses?—That I could not say.

11451. Would the appearance of the animal lead you to believe it was got by a good horse?—Yes, but not necessarily by a thoroughbred because it was by a good horse.

11452. You have not ridden any horse yourself that was got by a Hackney out of a hunting mare?—I don't know, I am riding a horse myself of Hackney stamp, but I think he is rather too big for a Hackney.

11453. I think Mr. Burdett-Coutts said he advocated Hackneys for harness, but not for saddle, on account of the get-away action, I think he said, have you found that?—The Hackney has been trained for 140 years to trot and do nothing but trot, and the thoroughbred has been trained for that number of years and a good many more to gallop, and I think it would be unwise to put Hackneys to your Irish mares with the idea of breeding hunters, but I don't think you would suffer by getting the Hackney cross into them, because it would give good trotting action, and there are many Hackneys who, if they were trained and had light shoes, and were ridden by men who understand riding, would be able to stay as well as hunters.

11454. Would you buy a hunter if you were told it was from a hunting brood mare by a Hackney?—I don't know that I would until I had seen it and had a ride on it—had had some trial.

11455. If a breeder told you it was either by a three-parts-bred hunting horse, or by a thoroughbred horse from a hunting mare, or by a Hackney, which would you prefer?—I would rather have a Hackney than a three-parts-bred horse.

11456. But you would rather buy the result of the thoroughbred horse from a hunting mare than of a Hackney sire from a hunting mare?—I don't approve of the Hackney on a hunting mare for a hunter.

11457. Then, if the Hackneys got out of the congested districts and got into the hunting districts of Ireland they might be detrimental to the breed of hunters sent over to England?—I don't believe so. I think the Hackney cross in the mare will do no harm. I would not advise the Hackney as the top cross on to the mare.

11458. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—What is the objection to the three-parts-bred horse?—Because I don't know how he is bred; but we do know that the Hackney comes of a good strain—he comes from "Flying Childers." You may have a Clydesdale or Cleveland in the three-parts-bred horse.

11459. You may, but may you not also in the Hackney?—I don't think so. We have a pedigree which proves it is as pure-bred as any other breed.

11460. Is not the Hackney stud-book very recent?—Yes, but we had the help of Wetherby's stud-book to back it—nearly all the best animals can trace back to Wetherby's in the direct male line.

11461. Is it not the case that you can introduce mares into it now?—No, except ponies under 14 hands.

11462. But eventually they get into the book?—If they breed good stock, but they are not likely to have any cart-horse blood in them.

11463. I don't think a three-parts-bred horse bred in Ireland is likely to have much cart-horse blood?—You have got a good many cart-horses in Ireland, and they are the very kind likely to produce more bone. You must have a certain alloy in three-parts-bred horses, and I don't think they have used Hackneys long enough to produce a three-parts-bred stallion with Hackney blood; therefore you must have cart-horse blood—an Arab would not give strength enough.

11464. Would not an Arab be a useful thing amongst the ponies of the country?—I don't think anything lighter in build would be likely to be a remunerative animal to sell.

11465. When you were there you saw some of the Hackney stallions, and liked them more or less?—Yes; I knew both horses before they went to Ireland.

11466. Did you see any of the thoroughbred horses that were standing about in the same district?—I saw one horse—I cannot remember his name—at Hollymount four or five years ago.

11467. Belonging to the Board?—No, I don't think so.

11468. You only saw one?—I only saw one.

11469. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Have you ever heard of the old Irish breed of horses that have not been crossed with imported cart-horse blood?—I have not, but I don't doubt it is so.

11470. You did not see it given in evidence at a former stage of the inquiry?—I have not seen any of the evidence you have taken.

11471. Have you ever seen what they call three-quarter-bred stallions in Ireland?—I have, near Belfast, and also close to Dublin.

11472. Those two places, I suppose, would only have horses crossed with either Clydesdale or Shires?—I should think not about Dublin. The horse I saw there, I don't remember what he was, but he was a very good-looking horse.

11473. You don't know anything about Tipperary or that part?—I don't.

11474. If you had a three-quarter bred horse with two or three crosses of thoroughbred on both dam and sire's side would you object to that kind of horse?—If he were a riding type or a horse that had action I would not. Take a horse from "Hermit" they would get good jumpers, but take the "Galopin" blood through "St. Simon" you would not have a horse that looked like a good riding horse.

11475. The three-quarter sire I am alluding to would be of the hunter stamp?—Not necessarily, because he had two or three crosses of thoroughbred.

11476. Certainly not; but if he came from a hunter mare with two or three crosses of breeding in him and the sire was thoroughbred, would you object to that class of horse?—Not at all.

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11477. Mr. CAREW.—You spoke of buying foals by a Hackney of the Congested Districts Board?—Yes.

11478. What became of those?—They were sold at a sale in Yorkshire.

11479. Did they fetch good prices?—They brought profitable returns on the prices I paid for them.

11480. Do you think they would be useful for farm work if kept by the breeders?—They were not like farm horses.

11481. They could not be useful for doing the ordinary work of the farm in the district?—In that district they would, because their mothers were doing farm work, and they were better proportioned and stronger animals than their mothers.

11482. They were all first cross horses?—Yes, and therefore had no pedigree that admitted them to any stud book and were therefore useless.

11483. Do you know the Congested Districts sires?—Yes, I saw them six weeks ago, and I saw several in England before they became the property of the Congested Districts.

11484. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you been a hunting man most of your life?—Yes, I have ridden to hounds ever since I was seven years old.

11485. And have you judged at a great many shows in different parts of the United Kingdom?—Yes.

11486. Do you know much about Mr. Mitchell's farm at Tourmakeady?—I paid a fortnight or three weeks' visit to it at one time.

11487. Do you know whether before he tried the Hackney breeding there he made other experiments to breed hunters?—Yes, he got a thoroughbred horse there.

11488. Did he breed many animals by that hunting horse?—Yes, a good many.

11489. Do you know why he gave it up for the Hackney?—Because they did not pay to bring to England to sell, and he had no use himself for them except to sell.

11490. He bred them for the market?—Yes.

11491. And you know they did not pay?—Yes.

11492. And then he put a Hackney there, do you know with what result?—It has done very well.

11493. And he constantly sells animals bred in Ireland in English markets?—Yes, every two years; he is popular still.

11494. Do you know do they fetch paying prices?—Yes, they pay very well, and he brings some of his tenants' foals across the first year to help to sell for them.

11495. Have you ever gone into the question of statistics at all as to what number of hunters there are brought from Ireland every year?—Well, I don't know what number of horses would be brought. I can only say the Government statistics of the number of horses that do come from Ireland of all classes, and you may take it from the number of hunts in England the probable number of hunters that are required every year.

11496. Have you at all made any calculation as to the probable number required?—I could not say distinctly. I did go into it some time ago.

11497. Do you know whether it is a large proportion of the general horses bred in the country?—I think it is, but not nearly so large as the general trade of the country. It is a larger proportion than the first-class harness trade, but not nearly so large as the ordinary riding and driving tradesmen's trade in the country.

11498. Then there is a large trade in Ireland outside the hunter in high-class carriage horses?—A very large trade. I have some statistics of the Board of Agriculture which gives the number of horses which have come from Ireland. This is taken from the last return we have, 1896—34,560 were exported from Ireland to England in 1895; we have not got the 1896 return.

11499. Do you know that in 1896 it has gone up to 40,000; it was in the *Times*?—No; I have not seen it.

11500. Do you know at all what proportion of these 34,000 would be the ordinary ride and drive horses below the high class hunter and harness horses?—I should think 20,000 at least.

11501. Do you think from your knowledge of the trade in England that there is a good trade in that class of horses which can be obtained by the Irishmen if they had any help in that direction?—I do.

11502. Do you find the demand for that class of horses increasing or decreasing in the North of England?—I think it would increase from your country considerably if you could get horses with straighter action and better and stronger hind quarters which the Hackney will give to you.

11503. Are the Irish horses deficient in action at present?—They are deficient in that kind of action which really sells well for harness horses.

11504. You don't find in the North of England that bicycles and the idea of motor carriages is lessening the trade in that class of horses?—Not at all.

11505. Has that trade increased in late years?—Oh, yes, considerably; more people drive in carriages now than did, I am told by coach-builders—nearly 100 per cent.

11506. You have made inquiries from the coach-builders?—Yes.

11507. And the trade in small carriages is very much larger?—Yes.

11508. I suppose in that class of horses the one thing that sells is action?—Straight action; it does not matter whether it is high or not, but it must be straight action, and that is a peculiarity of the Hackney horse that he has been bred with straight limbs and straight action, and I do not think it will do harm if he gets into the hunter in that way.

11509. Do you think that any of these large dealers in England, if they saw a horse that in appearance suited them, say by a thoroughbred horse, would refuse to buy it because its dam happened to be by a Hackney sire?—Not at all.

11510. You know their trade and know a good many of the dealers?—Yes. I know good horses hunting at present with the Hackney strain.

11511. How were they bred?—One was by "Sportsman," not a very well bred Hackney and out of a well-bred mare.

11512. What is he as a hunter?—Perhaps one of the best that ever looked through a bridle; he was sold for £300 and went to Leicestershire, sold for £400 there and is now back in our country, seventeen or eighteen years old, hunting regularly and carrying fifteen stone.

11513. There is no doubt about his breeding?—Not at all; I bought him myself when three years old.

11514. Mr. CAREW.—Not in Ireland?—No, bred in Westmoreland. I know the Master of the Oxenholme Hounds is riding a horse by a Hackney. I don't know his dam's breeding.

11515. Mr. WRENCH.—Is that a good horse?—Very good. He stays all day with the stag hounds, and stags go very fast, and ours is a rough undulating country.

11516. Are there many instances like that?—I only know another. Mr. Sawrey Cookson's mare, by a thoroughbred horse out of a registered Hackney mare; won at the Yorkshire and other Royal Shows and was a nailing good hunter.

11517. It has been stated to us in Ireland that the Hackney horse is soft?—I have not been able to ascertain where the softness comes in. I have gone into the pedigree of several of the leading strains of horses, and unless the softness comes from the thoroughbred I don't see where it is. I have gone into the leading strains of horses whose produce is most likely to be used. If Hackneys are to be used, there was "Lord Derby II."

11518. How does he trace back?—He traces back in the sixth generation to no less than eight crosses of the "Fireaway" (208), who was by Jenkinson's "Fireaway" by "Shales" by "Blaze" by "Flying

Childers," "Fireaway's" dam was by "Skyscraper" by "Highflyer," a son of "Flying Childers," that was a thoroughbred horse, besides a more recent cross of "Dutch Sam;" going back to the "Godolphin Arabian," you could not get much better breeding than that.

11519. Is it a fact that the principal Hackney horses at the present day trace back to the thoroughbred blood you have mentioned?—Yes. This horse "Lord Derby II." traces back to "Blaze" on one hand and "Sampson" on the other by "Joseph Andrews," by ———

11520. Was there much thoroughbred blood also in "Fireaway" and "Denmark"?—"Fireaway" (249) traces back to Lord Fitzwilliam's "Blacklegs," by "Standard," a lot of thoroughbred blood; whilst "Rufus," who was a champion horse, his grandam was by "Tamworth" by "Outlaw," the sire of his dam was by 'Lister's Wentworth" out of a thoroughbred mare.

11521. So that practically in their early breeding there was a large admixture of thoroughbred blood in the best Hackneys?—Decidedly.

11522. I don't know whether you know any of the pedigrees of the horses belonging to the Congested Districts Board, but did it come under your notice that a large amount of that blood is in the pedigrees of these horse?—Yes.

11523. Have you formed any opinion from actual experience as to the endurance of Hackneys?—Yes, I have seen a good deal of them, and I have one or two letters here I have received on the subject from men who have used them.

11524. On the particular point of endurance?—Yes. I have a letter here from Mr. Anderton, of Breeze Hill Stud Farm, Cadley, Preston:—

"I wish to give you the following facts respecting a Hackney mare, sire 'Lord Derby II.' (417), dam, breeding unknown, which I bought in 1886. She was then coming three-years-old and unbroken. I broke her myself, and in 1888, the Saturday before Whit-Monday, I drove her from Accrington to Harrogate, which is just fifty-one miles, in just nine hours, and I stayed to bait at Colne for an hour and a-half, and also at Ilkley the same, having just six hours' travelling or eight and a-half miles per hour, and she did the last eighteen miles in an hour and fifty minutes. Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday again following, the average miles per day driven was just over thirty, and on the Monday I drove her back again the fifty-one miles in nine and a-quarter hours, baiting three hours again, having completed in ten days just 342 miles. I have now a mare (8,825) 'Dolly,' sire 'Charley Merrylegs' (133), dam by 'Sir Charles' (768), that has been driven seventy-eight miles between eight o'clock in the morning and eight o'clock at night. These are only two cases out of many I could give. I have a cob by 'Performer' (1,328), dam 'Minnie' by 'Telegraph' (825), that I am sure could do thirty to forty miles a day the year round."

I have another letter from Mr. Green, of Welshpool. No man can say that he was a Hackney man, particularly. He was a judge of the Shire Horse Society last year, and he keeps one or two. I bought a very good Hackney mare from this gentleman, and understood from Mr. Robertson that she had been ridden to hounds. He writes:—

"Mr. Robertson misunderstood me. I did not ride 'Modesty' hunting, but hacked her regularly and found her everything you could wish as a riding Hackney. I may have told him that I felt sure she would carry anyone to hounds all day, and I still think so. My reason for not hunting her was that I always had the mare in foal, and did not think it safe to do so. My brother, one of the hardest riders in this neighbourhood, is now riding and hunting regularly a four-year-old by our Hackney stallion 'Blaze II.' (2,376) out of a three-parts-blood mare, and he says he never rode a better stayer, and that he is fast enough to ride to any hounds. I am of opinion that the Hackney stallion on blood mares will get the best all-round riding horse you can produce."

I have another from Mr. Taylor.

"The mare, 'Cullingsworth Bluestocking,' is still in my possession, and ready to do anything. I drove a horse-loving farmer to a train, six miles with her and nearly scared him to death, and yet she is as quiet as a sheep, and the easiest in the world to control. When we had arrived he couldn't speak, only he grasped my hand as though he never expected to see me again. The mare (5,056) 'Cullingsworth Bluestocking,' was turned out to grass in March last, and until the day before Blackpool Show, was not again used and had nothing but grass. She was then caught, shod, well groomed and fed, and lay in this night, and at 6.10 the following morning myself and a friend drove her in a rather heavy gig to the shows, a distance of forty-one miles in under four hours. Of course we were not trying against time, and the mare was never urged on. Returning the day following we added three miles (by a detour) to the journey, and were about three hours and forty-five minutes on the road. At the time she was about three months advanced in foal, and made the return trip without tasting food, the sudden change from grass to dry keep having apparently disarranged her digestive organs. She, however, took her meal on arriving home, and on the morning following danced out of the yard backwards."

11525. Do you know how that mare was bred?—She was bred in Ireland, at Tourmakeady.

11526. Have you any other special instance?—Mr. Ashworth, Master of Hounds, has two Hackney mares which he rides out regularly, and has ridden them to the meets and back again at night. They are by a Hackney of his own breeding from a mare of his own. He knows their breeding.

11527. He says they can stay?—They can stay all day, and carry him back without ever kicking their toes in the ground or anything.

11528. CHAIRMAN.—With the exception of one of the animals you mentioned, you know nothing of them yourself?—I do not; not in the least.

11529. And the account, especially in the first letter you read, of the distances these animals travelled, would you think that was a fair average of what an ordinary Hackney can do?—Yes; I think it is a good Hackney. It is rather above the average.

11530. I forget exactly the distance travelled in a day?—345 miles in the nine days.

11531. You think that would be a little above the average?—Oh! yes. I don't think that it would be likely that every horse could do it.

11532. You hunt a good deal yourself?—Yes; I have always hunted.

11533. Have you ever ridden a Hackney yourself hunting?—Never.

11534. What kind of hunter do you generally use?—Generally a thoroughbred one.

11535. Where do you get him from?—I bought a good many in Ireland.

11536. For your own hunting you prefer an Irish hunter by a thoroughbred sire?—I don't know if I prefer it, but it has been always my pleasure to make one, and I am not a very great weight, and except for one I am riding now, I think I have always had high bred ones, and he won the jumping at Dublin.

11537. I suppose the Hackney type was particularly well established and distinguished before the institution of the stud-book?—Decidedly; they had kept a very good record of the male line, but not of the female line.

11538. Do you know if there was in Ireland a fairly distinct type sometimes called the old Irish hunter?—I am not sufficiently acquainted with it to say.

11539. Assuming for the sake of argument there was such a type of animal and crossed frequently with a thoroughbred sire, would you object to the stallion being half bred under those circumstances, precluding

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any strain of cart-horse blood or Cleveland blood?—Not at all.

11540. Your objection to the half-bred I gather is that probably the alloy was of the cart-horse strain?—Yes.

11541. I think you said that of your own horses you are not quite sure whether one of them had a Hackney strain in him or not?—From his appearance I would think so, but not from his size and substance; I am not quite sure; he won the jumping at Dublin some few years ago.

11542. I think you also said that, in your opinion, the average Irish farmer would be able to detect after several generations the strain of Hackney blood?—Not after several generations.

11543. I did not know whether you credit the average Irish farmer with a greater facility for the detection than you possess yourself?—No, it was in the first cross that he would not have much difficulty; they are a horse with strong powers of typing themselves that I think they would be very likely to show.

11545. You made an estimate of the total number of horses imported from Ireland in 1896, as to the proportion that the hunters and high class horses would bear to it, that is from your own general knowledge of the trade, I suppose?—Yes.

11546. Have you formed any estimate in your own mind of what the relative value would be, in round numbers you say 10,000 would be hunters and high class horses, and 20,000 general utility horses, have you any idea of the relative value of the 10,000 against the 20,000?—I have not, because I don't think that many of the horses that are eventually sold for high prices are sold for a lot of money in Ireland; it is a question of education or getting them into the hands of men who can place them.

11547. At any rate you cannot give us the relative values?—I don't think the relative value is very different in Ireland between a fairly middle-class hunter and an ordinary riding and driving nag; it is the man in England who gets it, or the man who brings them over to English fairs; the breeder does not reap a large amount of benefit.

11548. Do you know anything about cavalry remounts?—I do not.

11549. I suppose horses bred in Yorkshire and other parts of England have passed through your hands?—A good many.

11550. Can you form any opinion whether the breeding of Hackneys in Yorkshire has interfered with the breeding of hunters?—No, I don't think so.

11551. Not at all?—I don't think so.

11552. You think as many good hunters come out of Yorkshire as before?—Yes, there are more men hunting, there are more horses wanted.

11553. And in your opinion the market value of the general utility horse keeps up as good as ever?—It does, as good as ever.

11554. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Those 34,000 horses, are they all bred in Ireland?—That I could not say; there are no statistics given except that they come from Ireland to England, and that includes also the horses that pass through England to go to France and Belgium.

11555. Lord ASHTOWN.—It would also include horses that had gone over to Shows in Ireland and come back again?—Yes.

11556. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—How did you say "Sportsman" was bred?—He was by a Hackney, but very little was known of the breeding of his dam. He was out of an ordinary country-bred mare; it might be an Irish mare or anything. We get a great number of Irish horses into Westmoreland and Cumberland. It might be an ordinary ride and drive mare of the country or an Irish horse.

11557. Was he by a stud-book Hackney?—Yes.

11558. Lord RATHDONNELL.—With reference to the 34,000 horses, do you know whether with a cavalry regiment moving from Ireland to England the horses of that regiment would be in that number?—Those are horses that are traded in. The cavalry remounts would be included, but not the horses of a cavalry regiment.

11559. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—How would they exclude them in the statistics?—The Government would do that.

11560. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I wanted to know how you got those figures?—From the Board of Agriculture volume.

11561. Lord ASHTOWN.—Are those horses that have been bought and sold?—They are horses that have been bought and sold and shipped. I don't think they would include the Government horses.

11562. In Mr. Anderton's letter, the first mare you mentioned, I think he said, was by a Hackney?—By a Hackney, dam unknown.

11563. Does that constitute a Hackney?—No; she is not in the stud-book.

11564. May I ask you did you buy or hire any sires for the Congested Districts Board?—None.

11565. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Are you a member of the Hackney Society's Council?—No, sir.

11566. But you are nominated by the Hackney Horse Society as an expert in Hackney horses to give evidence to this Commission. I noticed that when you were telling us the pedigree of these Hackney sires you seemed to set a considerable store on their being descended from thoroughbred horses, why?—I don't know that I set particular store upon it, but it was a proof that they were bred from a good line of horses.

11567. You acknowledge that the thoroughbred horse is a good line?—Decidedly.

11568. If there is any advantage in being bred from a thoroughbred horse, surely the nearer you can get to the thoroughbred horse the better?—I believe that.

11569. I noticed that those thoroughbred horses you referred to in the pedigree of those Hackney stallions were horses that were about contemporary with the Darley Arabian and "Flying Childers"?—Yes.

11570. By this time you must have pretty nearly effectively crossed out the thoroughbred blood from the Hackney?—I don't think it has been crossed out, because fresh thoroughbred blood has been brought in at other times. I don't know that we are breeding to keep in the thoroughbred blood, but for a horse of trotting action.

11571. You occasionally bring in thoroughbred blood again?—It has been done so.

11572. Why?—That I don't know.

11573. It is admitted then by the lovers of the Hackney that thoroughbred blood is of advantage to the Hackney?—Certainly; it gives him quality, and some of them are wanting in slope of shoulder, and are perhaps too strong in their muscular development—a rough-looking horse, and they are admittedly very much improved by a cross of thoroughbred blood.

11574. It seems to me that if you follow that to a logical conclusion, if you eradicate the Hackney and stick to the thoroughbred, you would get a better horse than you have?—I grant you that for some purposes, but you could not get weight and substance.

11575. I have not seen many Hackney stallions, but I have never seen one half the size of a thoroughbred?—You could have seen yesterday twenty stallions shown above 15.2, and many of them up to 16 hands, and many of them are able to take a big carriage. "Surefoot" is a good big thoroughbred. Take on the other hand all the little weeds you have.

11576. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know anything about the American trade in horses?—I have seen a good deal of it.

11577. Are they not sending over a large number of horses to England and Ireland now?—Yes.

11578. It has been suggested to us that American horses should be branded in order that they may be known when they come to this country, do you think that would be a good plan or not?—For what is the purpose of branding, simply for the purpose of knowing them?

11579. Yes, to distinguish them as American horses?—I would not approve of branding anywhere where it would disfigure the horse.

11580. You think there ought to be an opportunity of buying them no matter whether they came from America or Ireland?—I don't think a man who gets an American horse should have him branded and destroy his chance of having a good horse because some good horses come from America.

11581. Do you know that many American horses have been sold as Irish horses?—Yes, and sold as English horses too, I know you have a good many in Ireland now. I would suggest branding but, not very strongly, not so that it would depreciate the animal in appearance, it should not be in any conspicuous place.

11582. How would you brand?—Underneath his mane.

11583. With a hot iron?—Yes, branding his foot is no use.

Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—A hog-mane horse would get the worst of it.

11584. Mr. WRENCH.—You have been talking of thoroughbred horses as opposed to hunters, now put them out of the question and think of the small farmers, what do you think would be the best sire for their mares?—A horse with some Hackney blood in him, because he will give good action and good shapes and round strong muscular development, a horse that they will be able to sell.

11585. Have you ever seen the same action from horses got by a thoroughbred as you have from horses got by Hackneys?—Not consistently, I have seen some thoroughbred horses that have got horses with a good deal of action and have been very beautiful carriage horses, but they don't get them consistently.

11586. And is the middle class horse's action the chief selling quality?—Yes.

11587. CHAIRMAN.—What are those American and foreign horses used for, mostly harness?—Yes, many of them are being trained for private work and taking the place in London of some of our Yorkshire horses that used to be, and of your Irish horses that are good goers, but the principal numbers are streeters for lorries.

11588. Looking at the matter, as we are bound to do from the point of view of the industry in Ireland, would you say, that in breeding for harness purposes in Ireland, the breeder would be subjected to greater competition than in breeding for hunting purposes?—I don't know anybody who does breed especially for hunting purposes either in England or Ireland.

11589. There are certain districts in Ireland where the object of the breeder is to produce a hunter?—Yes.

11590. I am asking you generally what your opinion would be, whether in trying to produce hunters the competition would be less than in breeding for harness purposes?—I think either would have a good sale, and would not be affected by any foreign horses of a high class.

11591. Is not nearly the whole of Great Britain more or less devoted to breeding for harness purposes and are not the greater number of these foreign importations used for harness purposes?—The foreign importations are used only for common work. But with regard to England they are devoting considerable attention to the breeding of cart-horses and hunters, cart-horses especially just at present.

11592. Do you suppose the majority of horses used for hunting in England are bred in England or bred in Ireland?—I should say about two-thirds of them are bred in Ireland.

11593. Lord LONDONDERRY.—You have bought horses for a good many years in Ireland?—Yes.

11594. Should you say at the present time that the breed of horses taken generally is as good or better or worse than it was when you began to buy horses?—There are not as many horses with size and substance as there were, there are more weeds, unsaleable horses until they know their business, if they are good enough for hunters. When I went there first, which is some twenty-two or twenty-three years ago, we could find a good many fine big upstanding horses with quality. *March 5, 1897.* Mr. William Bainbridge.

11595. Then you think the breed of horses has deteriorated in the last twenty years?—Decidedly.

11596. In specified classes?—I am taking your light horse as a class, not the hunters, we don't know very much about the hunters until they are made, but hundreds of horses that are bought as hunters never see a hound as long as they live in your country.

11597. Your experience is that the breed of horses as a whole has deteriorated?—Decidedly, there is a want of substance and shapes that was not the case some twenty-three years ago.

11598. That is over the whole of Ireland?—No, it is more particularly the northern part.

11599. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Should you think the bad times had anything to do with forcing the farmers to sell their mares more than they did years ago?—I don't think bad times have done it so much as the extra prices the foreigner gives for a good-looking mare to take abroad, and there is no chance of getting them back again, we can get geldings from abroad, but not mares.

11600. Mr. CAREW.—It is the bad times that have induced the farmers to sell to the foreigner?—I don't think so, a man will sell the most saleable article on his farm whatever the times are, whether he is well off or ill off unless he is keen about it.

11601. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think that has prevailed in England, have the good mares been sold in England?—Decidedly.

11602. Has the Hunters' Improvement Society not had an effect in England yet?—It has not had that effect that one would expect to see come of it. The stallions chosen have in many instances not been acceptable to the farmers.

11603. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I suppose the foreigners offer the same inducements to the farmers in the South of Ireland as in the North?—Probably, but the foreigner likes a mare with a little action, and in the North of Ireland the mares have always had a little more action than the hunter mares in the South.

11604. Then it is in the North of Ireland you see this deterioration of the horses?—Yes.

11605. You don't think it is in any way due to the great popularity of a horse called "Broad Arrow" that the farmers in the North of Ireland say is the best horse that came in there?—I don't think one horse can change the type of the whole of the country.

11606. He got a great many sires I understand?—I never saw a horse by "Broad Arrow," I have seen a good many "Broad Arrow" mares.

11607. And then "Bounding Willow" for instance?—"Bounding Willow," I don't know; I think he is in Scotland, he would not be in Ireland very long.

11608. MR. WRENCH.—When you speak of the North of Ireland, what fairs do you mean?—Moy, Armagh, Saintfield, and round about that.

11609. When you are buying there, what aged horses do you buy?—Four and five year olds.

11610. And do you know that a great proportion of these horses come from the South of Ireland?—I am led to understand that a great many are bred there and brought to the North to feed as two and three year olds.

Mr. JAMES M'MEEKEN, Carnbooth, Busby, examined. Mr. James M'Meeken.

11611. CHAIRMAN. — You live at Busby?—Yes.

11612. That is near Glasgow?—Yes. I should like to read the main evidence I wish to give, and then shall be glad to answer any questions. I am a factor and land agent in Glasgow, and a breeder of Hackneys at my home at Carnbooth, Busby. I was one of the judges of Hackneys at the

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Mr. James M'Meeken

London Spring Show in 1895, and last November I was one of the judges of Hackneys at the National Horse Show of America at New York. I wish to state at the outset that I have had no experience in my own stud of crossing Hackneys, or their produce with other breeds. Any evidence therefore I can give on this branch of the subject is necessarily limited to observation of such animals at agricultural shows, and throughout the country generally. I am well acquainted with the ordinary ride and drive horses of Scotland, and I can speak very distinctly to a marked improvement in this class of young stock since the introduction of Hackney stallions in the north. I am a member of the "Scotch Committee" of the Hackney Horse Society which was formed in 1890 for the purpose of encouraging the breeding of Hackneys in Scotland, and the separation into different classes of Hackneys and hunters at Scotch shows. This Committee has subscribed about £1,000 within the last five years. The money is spent in giving contributions towards the prizes to agricultural societies under certain conditions as to classes, judges, etc. Prior to the existence of the "Scotch Committee," hunters and roadsters were for the most part classed and exhibited together at Scotch shows. This practice was a most discouraging one to breeders, both of hunting stock and roadster stock. Now, however, through the effects of the "Scotch Committee" each breed of horses is exhibited in its own class; and breeders can see by comparison what progress they are making in the improvement of their respective breeds. In place therefore of the introduction of the Hackney into Scotland proving detrimental to the breed of hunting horses there, the very reverse has been the result, as hunting young stock have now separate classification at most of the principal shows in consequence of the introduction of the Hackney and the operations of the "Scotch Committee." In my opinion there is no real ground for supposing that the introduction of the Hackney horse into Ireland will interfere with the breeding of hunting stock there. The Hackney stallion has not interfered with the breeding of hunting or other thoroughbred stock in Scotland. If all the Queen's premium thoroughbred stallions were located round me I would never think of using one of them in my Hackney stud; and I presume the same thing would apply to the owners of thoroughbred studs in regard to Hackney stallions. In my opinion the one class of animal does not clash with the other in the least. I have observed that objection has been taken to the Hackney on the allegation that he is a soft blooded animal without staying power; and therefore is not a breed to be encouraged. If this was true I would agree with objectors, but in my opinion the charge is entirely unfounded, except as regards perhaps one particular strain of blood. However, I think it has been clearly proved by Mr. Euren, the Secretary of the Hackney Horse Society, that one of the progenitors of this strain, although registered as of good Hackney blood, is really of foreign descent. The get of this horse some years ago were largely introduced into Scotland by dealers, and they have done incalculable harm to the true interest of Hackney breeding in Scotland. In my opinion, however, the staying power of such strains of Hackney blood as Danegelt 174, Denmark 177, Lord Derby II. 417, and Fireaway 249 cannot be disputed. I believe there is no breed of horses in the world so sound and generally serviceable to the use of man as the Hackney; and while there is plenty of room for all classes of horses (even the pleasure race horse and pleasure hunting horse) there ought in my opinion to be special encouragement given to Hackney sires throughout the country, both because of the soundness and utility of the breed, but also because the Hackney stallion is the most likely animal to produce out of the ordinary mares of the country a valuable class of carriage horses, which at the present moment this country is much in need of, and is largely dependent on America for its supply. When I was in America I had an opportunity of seeing the result of crossing the Hackney horse on American native bred mares. At the New York show the Hackney stallion Cadet came into the ring with four of his get out of such mares following him. I had also an opportunity of seeing a large number of native mares themselves. When I say native mares I do not mean their fast-trotting stock, but the ordinary ride and drive animals of the country. These mares are very blood-like, but with very light and puny limbs and small joints and necks too heavy on the underside. The produce I refer to by Cadet were big strong animals with big limbs and joints and nicely shaped necks, and appeared to me to be like growing into very handsome and powerful carriage horses. After the show was over I had an opportunity, on the invitation of Mr. Cassatt, the President of the Hackney Horse Society of America, of viewing his large stud at Philadelphia. I saw there a considerable number of youngster by Cadet out of native mares, and a finer lot of Hackney shaped animals I have seldom seen. The result of crossing the Hackney stallion on these native mares, so far as I had an opportunity of judging, was a great improvement on the native animal itself, and I would say as soon as the Americans overcome their unnatural prejudice against things English, and go in generally for the use of the Hackney stallion, they are likely to produce, in my opinion, probably the best carriage horses in the world for size, quality, and pace. Then with regard to native Scotch pony mares bred to Hackney stallions, I can speak with the greatest confidence. I am decidedly of the opinion that no cross has produced such good results in Scotland as the Hackney stallion on such mares. The prepotency of the well-bred Hackney stallion for producing his own type and good qualities out of weedy thoroughbreds, ordinary odd farmer's light-legged mares or mountain ponies, is one of the marked characteristics of this breed of horses.

11613. Lord LONDONDERRY.—I notice you state that you yourself if you were surrounded with thoroughbred stallions would not cross them with a Hackney; in the same way you would not expect that anybody surrounded with Hackneys would cross thoroughbred or hunter-bred mares with them?—I think so. I limit my remarks entirely to thoroughbreds —I mean the pure-bred thoroughbreds. I did not include any half-bred animal in that. I meant those gentlemen who own studs that are pure in breed—all thoroughbred—they would never think of using a Hackney in such. The same thing applies in America where the 2.10 and 2.8 trotting horse is. These gentlemen would not think of using a Hackney stallions on these mares, and my remarks there again apply to the ordinary mare of the country.

11614. The great fear of the hunter breeders in Ireland is that the smaller farmers might be tempted to send the mares that breed good hunters to Hackney stallions instead of sires that have got good hunters. Do you think there would be any danger of that?—I think not; the price would regulate that and the shape to a large extent; there is no mistaking the Hackney in the first cross.

11615. Do you think yourself that it would do harm?—I am not a hunting man, and prefer not to speak about hunters.

11616. But so far as you yourself are concerned you would keep the Hackney distinctly to its own class of mare?—As far as my own stud is concerned.

11617. And you think that would be generally supported by gentlemen you have talked to about it?—By owners of pure-bred studs.

11618. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—As far as your remarks are concerned they don't apply to hunter-breeding to any extent?—No.

11619. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think in your

statement that you read to us you state that the hunters in Scotland had been improved by the importation of Hackneys?—Understand me distinctly about that. They have been improved, not by using Hackneys to produce hunters, but by the operation of the Scotch Committee of the Hackney Society in providing classifications for such horses and enabling those who went in for breeding hunters to see the effect of the operations at these shows. Previous to this Committee being formed there was great trouble in exhibiting the hunters and foadsters together. If a roadster judge went into the ring to judge, or there was a majority of roadster judges, the high-stepping ones went to the top; but if it happened that a majority of thoroughbred or hunting men went into the ring, the other class went to the top, and both classes of breeders were discouraged and had no means of seeing how they progressed in their breeding. To that extent only my remarks apply.

11620. Lord ASHTOWN.—You mean to say that if Hackneys were given separate classes, and horses got by Hackneys distinct from the hunter class, people would keep the two breeds more separate?—Yes, I do, distinctly; if that was done there would be no danger whatever in Ireland.

11621. If young horses got by Hackney stallions were not forced to compete in the classes for hunters you think it would encourage the men who use Hackneys not to cross them on mares likely to go into the hunter classes?—Quite so.

11622. Mr. CAREW.—Is there much hunter-breeding in Scotland?—I would not say there is much; there are very good classes exhibited, probably ten or a dozen young stock come out at most of the principal shows.

11623. Do you know how they are bred?—No, I don't; but I presume they are got by thoroughbred horses from the look of them.

11624. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think that the American trade, to which you referred in your statement when you spoke of their prejudice against English horses, do you think when they correct that, that the American trade will be very formidable to native breeders here?—I think it will.

11625. You think it will increase very largely?—I think so.

11626. And their horses will continue to improve?—I think so.

11627. Have you thought in any way if there is any remedy for the breeders in this country?—Yes; I think we have the remedy in our own hands, and can compete with America if we are careful in using Hackneys on the ordinary mares of the country. We have a type of ordinary mares in Scotland, and there is another class in Ireland, different altogether from the hunting or thoroughbred mares that we can improve to an extent—I think we can compete successfully with America if we use a prepotent breed of Hackney, and we have plenty of them in our country.

11628. Of course the America trade is practically only up to the present in general utility horses and harness horses?—Yes; I think they can be easily observed when they come; they are not a stylish horse. I think this class of horses needs no branding they are branded already by the type. But there is another class of horses comes from America, and I have a strong suspicion that these horses I am speaking of now have got a dash of the Hackney blood in them, because they are more near the type of our Hackney, and those are the animals that we have to fear, not the other ones.

11629. Are they coming in in increasing numbers now?—I think so.

11630. Would you approve of branding horses coming from America?—I should not think so; the best way of branding is to compete with them.

11631. You think that is possible?—I think it is thoroughly possible.

11632. Have you any instances of the same mare being put to a thoroughbred horse and being put to a Hackney horse, with the result?—Yes; I think I have some notes here on that point. There is one mare I have noted, owned by Mr. Wm. Scott, of Gilfoot. It was inspected and entered in the Hackney Stud Book, 3,856 "Gillyflower"; the sire of the mare was "Donal Grand," and the dam "Kate," a 14.2 pony cob, which I have seen, by the thoroughbred horse "Ascetic" by "Hermit." This produce has been a winner of many prizes, including the champion gold medal at Cardiff against true bred Hackneys. Then there is another one out of the same mare, a very good one, by the same horse, which is now in the stud of the Marquis of Londonderry at Seaham-Harbour. I have also seen that, it is a nice one. The mare was a little mare worth about £20, and this mare "Gillyflower," if I was asked to value it at the present moment I would put her at not less than £500.

11633. Lord ASHTOWN.—Was that mare crossed with a thoroughbred?—No. But I know instances of that. Another instance of a mare belonging to Mr. Watson Murray, son of the Factor of Montrose; he owned a mare called "Black Bess," 2,576. She was inspected; her sire was "Star of the East," dam "Polly" by "Omen," thoroughbred, winner of first prize at Cleveland, Dumbarton, Ayr, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. Then I have another instance, Mr. Adams, a gentleman in our neighbourhood, Renfrew; he bred "Prince Confidence," 3,879, whose sire was "King Confidence," and dam "Trefolia," an Irish mare, 15.1, half-bred. Mr. Adams purchased this mare when in foal for £22, and sold her produce, a filly by a thoroughbred horse, when four years old, to the Horse Guards for £30. Her next foal, "Prince Confidence," took third prize at Glasgow when a yearling, and was sold when two years old to a dealer for £100 for America. He informs me the dealer refused £350 for him. Probably the best specimens of this crossing that I have seen was a pair of powerful carriage horses owned by Mr. Morton, got by the Hackney stallion "Lord Derby II.," 417, out of light-legged Yorkshire cart mares. Those horses are 15.3, and were sold at a sale for £450.

11634. Mr. WRENCH.—Then you think that Hackneys can get high-class carriage horses?—Distinctly.

11635. Have you any experience as to their staying and endurance?—Not personally, except from my own driving. I drive a pair of Hackneys and there is no softness about them.

11636. CHAIRMAN.—As to the crossing of the Hackney on the pony mare, have you any experience of that?—Not in my own stud; I have seen it.

11637. Can you tell us anything about it?—We have one very marked instance in Scotland of this. The celebrated pony stallion "Mars" is about 13.3 hands high, he is now owned by Mr. Mitchell, of Polmont, he was got by the Hackney stallion "Derby" (Graham's), 953, out of a mare from the Isle of Skye. He was a winner all along the line and took second at York, when Mr. Christopher Wilson's wonderful pony appeared as his opponent, and he was seldom beaten except when he met him.

11638. Where is this pony?—He is living at Milfield, near Edinburgh.

11639. Do you know anything of his produce?—He has made a most marked improvement in the breed of ponies round our district. You can tell a "Mars" pony any place. He can step up to his chin, and go with force. There is a bit of strength about him for pulling machines.

11640. What kind of mares has he been put to?—All kinds. The rough little mares that come from the Highlands, and all round. Then I have a very extraordinary instance of his cross again—Mr. Sydney Brunton's famous pony "Surprise." It has gone all round England and taken very many prizes. It is 12.2 hands high. It was got by "Mars," out of a little mare 13 hands high by the thoroughbred horse "Exminster." I have seen the dam of this pony a little

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screw of a thing. "Surprise" was sold at Mr. Mitchell's sale, after a most spirited competition, for 255 guineas, and I believe it would bring double the money now if put into the market.

11641. Lord ASHTOWN.—The dam was a little screw?—Yes.

11642. CHAIRMAN.—The dam was by a thoroughbred horse. Do you know out of what?—By "Exminster." I don't know what out of.

11643. Are you acquainted with Ireland at all as a horse-breeding country?—No.

11644. Are there any districts in Scotland particularly devoted to producing hunters?—There are a lot of hunters produced round the district of Ayr, for instance, but I don't know that in Scotland there is any one district specially marked for producing hunters. It is rather a general thing spread all over.

11645. Would you say that the production of hunters was a small or a large part of the whole of horse-breeding as an industry in Scotland?—I would say it was a fair proportion, judging from the number that appear in the classes at the shows.

11646. I gather from you, you think the introduction of the Hackney into Scotland benefited the hunter in as far as a separate class was given for them?—Yes, my lord.

11647. But do you think that the use of the Hackney sire is beneficial in producing hunters?—I do not.

11648. Then may I take it that you consider the Hackney principally as a harness horse?—Saddle and harness.

11649. You mean by saddle not including hunters?—Not including hunters.

11650. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know whether a large number of horses are taken from the North of Ireland to Scotland now?—I believe there are.

11651. And do you think that if Hackneys were introduced into the North of Ireland where they don't breed hunters, that Scotchmen would give more for the produce than they do for the animals that are now bred there?—I think they would. I believe if a Hackney stallion were used there it would create a revolution in the character and style and type of the animal sent over, and it is in that way that I hold we can compete with America successfully.

11652. When you talk of a revolution you are not talking of hunters, but of the bad class of horses that now come from Ireland?—Yes. I don't interfere with the thoroughbred. There is room for them all, and I believe that is the lines on which we must go for the breeding of horses in Ireland—keeping our lines separate. We have done that most successfully in Scotland, and I believe in Scotland there has already been a marked improvement, and there will be more from year to year as we go on.

11653. Have you ever considered whether it would be possible to keep a registration of horses in different districts so that the breeding of all the horses might be known—do you think the foreigner would give a bigger price if he could ascertain the true pedigree of a horse?—I think he might. I think he would, in fact. But most men look at the type of the animal for his pedigree—I mean for ordinary work; but for export it would be an improvement if horses could be certified to be bred a certain way, if they had any thought of breeding them again.

11654. But you think the ordinary buyer does not think much about pedigree?—Not for carriage work; for instance for a gelding, I don't think it matters how he comes if he is of the right shape and type.

11656. CHAIRMAN.—As far as you are concerned you bred only pure-bred Hackneys?—The purest breed I can get.

11656. But you approve of crossing them; you have given us some instances where they have been crossed very successfully?—Yes.

11657. What becomes of the misfits in the case, say of the cross of the Hackney stallion with the ordinary mare of the country; they cannot always be successful; what are they used for?—They find their way, I presume, into trams, and busses, and cabs.

11658. Have you any idea what their market value would be?—No; I cannot speak of the value of these ordinary horses; owners get rid of them as soon as they can, if they happen to have any of them.

Mr. W. R. Trotter

Mr. W. R. TROTTER, Stockfield-on Tyne, examined.

11659. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Stockfield-on-Tyne?—I do.

11660. Are you occupied in horse-breeding?—Yes.

11661. Do you buy horses at all?—Yes.

11662. What class of horses do you breed?—All kinds.

11663. For all kinds of purposes?—Yes.

11664. You keep stallions of your own?—Yes, about twenty.

11665. Of what breed?—Pony stallions, Hackney stallions, thoroughbred, hunters, Clydesdale, and Shires.

11666. What do you mean by hunters—half-bred?—Yes.

11667. What do you understand by a hunter sire?—I understand by a hunter sire a horse of a hunting type that can be hunted.

11668. I mean how bred?—Well, I have only had two One horse I bought at Kilburn Royal Show; he was not a clean thoroughbred; I bought him out of the coach-horse class. He was of a distinct hunter type—only three years old. I took him to the North. There was a show where there was a prize given for the best hunter, and I showed him against "Gambler," and I thought he was going to beat him, but his age rather detracted from him. I hunted him for two seasons, and he left more good hunters in the two seasons than any horse I ever had.

11669. Lord ASHTOWN.—What was his name?—"Lord Lisburn."

11670. CHAIRMAN.—In buying a hunter sire of that kind would you consider at all what blood the alloying consisted of, whether cart-horse, Cleveland, or Hackney?—I would not care so very much where it came from so long as he got it, but I should certainly have a hunter stallion off a hunter mare that proved herself a good class hunter, because I consider any stallion is more likely to reproduce the features of his mother than anything else.

11671. How many Hackney sires do you keep?—I have three or four just now.

11672. How many thoroughbreds?—I have one thoroughbred.

11673. Do you use him for breeding thoroughbreds?—No, simply for hunters; at least when I say simply for hunters people can use him for any sort of mare they like.

11674. Do you keep mares yourself, too?—Yes.

11675. A number of mares?—I should say getting on to about twenty.

11676. Of various breeds?—Yes, all breeds.

11677. And these you put your own stallions to, I suppose?—Yes.

11678. Can you tell us what breed of mares you put to what breed of stallions?—I am breeding from my hunter mares now by "Carlsbad" by "Hilarious," out of "Zoedone's" dam. He is four crosses from a Welsh pony; his dam bred "St. Galmier," "Zoedone," "Marienbad," and this one of mine.

11679. Mr. FITZWILLIAM. — "Carlsbad" is not thoroughbred?—No, but he has won eleven steeplechases, and carried 13½ stone over the Aintree course. He is absolutely sound.

11680. How old?—He was seven years in training;

I don't know his exact age. I was talking to a gentleman the other day that had one of the same breed descended from the same mare, and he says they are the hardest and best horses he ever saw, and this horse of mine is absolutely clean on his legs.

11681. CHAIRMAN.—And you put most of your hunter mares to him?—I put them all to him.

11682. And have for some time?—I have had him only two seasons; this is the third season.

11683. And you are satisfied with the produce?—Perfectly.

11684. You put none of your hunter mares to the Hackney or thoroughbred?—I put one mare to a thoroughbred horse two years ago, but judging from the produce I would not think of using anything else than this horse now.

11685. Then I judge, as far as breeding for hunting purposes is concerned, you have no objection at all to the half-bred horse?—Certainly not.

11686. Do you think that type could be sufficiently defined? Supposing there was a system of registration for them, could you define what you mean?—There are a great many people breed hunters, and a lot of people breed good ones. My idea would be to breed a hunter stallion off a first-class hunter mare which has been hunted and remained absolutely sound.

11687. Then in a system of registration, as far as the half-bred sire is concerned, do you think it necessary that before allowing him to be registered his past performances should be considered as a hunter or steeplechaser, and the produce he got?—Well, to a certain extent that may hold good. I have used Hackney stallions on hunter mares, big-sized Hackney stallions, and they have left some first-class hunters, so that it would be altogether unfair to condemn these horses for hunter breeding simply on their own merits. If there is to be a system of registration I should certainly take individual merit as the leading consideration. Of course I mean by individual merit an animal good in itself that can perform, because I think the accomplishments of the hunter are undoubtedly hereditary.

11688. You have put hunter mares to Hackney stallions?—Yes. Well, I have kept Hackney stallions and seen their produce off hunter mares.

11689. Off your own mares?—My own mares, no; I have only a small place, and cannot keep a great lot.

11690. What is your opinion of the produce?—Well, I have had Hackney stallions get some very good hunters indeed.

11691. Out of what kind of mare?—I saw a horse by a Hackney the other day hunting with the Tynedale going remarkably well. I followed him. There were four of us going pretty sharp, and he kept with us twenty minutes. He is a fast horse; has never given his owner a fall; he is fourteen-years-old, and absolutely sound.

11692. Do you know what his dam was?—Yes, a hunter mare.

11693. What do you mean exactly by a hunter mare?—A mare that has been hunted and had been breeding hunters to thoroughbred stallions. The year before she bred a remarkably good hunter by the horse of mine, "Lord Lisburn."

11694. Taking it generally, do you approve of the Hackney sire for the purpose of getting hunters?—Undoubtedly. I believe the Hackney stallion to improve almost every class of horse.

11695. For hunting and for all purposes?—For hunting and for all purposes. I advised a friend of mine to put a thoroughbred mare to a Hackney stallion of mine two years ago. She is by "Esterling." She had been sent to a fashionable thoroughbred stallion and broke. He sent her to me and said:—"I want you to cover her with any horse you like." I put her to a big-sized Hackney stallion, and he replies to my enquiry:—"I have every reason to be satisfied with my yearling filly got by your Hackney stallion. She has big limbs, correct shoulders of a hunting type, and gives promise of being a high-class weight-carrying hunter."

11696. Do you know Ireland at all?—Yes, I have been to the Dublin Show a few times.

11697. You don't know the country generally?—I cannot say that I know the country generally, but I have a general idea of the horses that come from it.

11698. Would you think that the introduction of Hackney blood into these districts of the country that breed hunters principally would be beneficial or prejudicial?—I should think it would be beneficial certainly.

11699. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You say the cross of the Hackney stallion with the hunter mare produces a good hunter?—I know so to my own knowledge.

11700. But you say you do not cross your hunter mares with a Hackney stallion to get hunters; now, why, if the produce is so good?—Because I have a hunter stallion which I like better. You see I keep a lot of stallions. I see the various mares that are put to them, and can see the effect that these horses have on the mares, and I unhesitatingly say that for lightish mares a Hackney stallion can get always a much more marketable animal than a thoroughbred.

11701. Why would you advocate Hackney stallions in Ireland to improve the breed of hunters?—For the very good and sufficient reason that there appears to be a unanimity of opinion that there are too many small horses in Ireland, and if you put the mares to a Hackney stallion you are sure to get a great deal more bone, and if you don't breed a hunter you will probably breed something which will pay you a good deal better, a high-class harness horse; and if you get your mares stronger and put them to the thoroughbred again you are sure to breed a better hunter.

11702. Would not a horse such as "Carlsbad" be a better stamp to put in Ireland?—My horse has five crosses of blood, and I know he is getting first-class hunters off mares with strength, but if you have mares that are already too light you want something stronger.

11703. What size is "Carlsbad"?—He is a little tall on his legs, 16.1 hands. I think it would be better if he were an inch lower.

11704. What sort of bone?—The best you ever put your hand on, big bone and marvellous quality; there is a thin skin, and his tendons are so big.

11705. Still you think that he would not mate with a small mare?—I would rather risk a Hackney stallion to breed a marketable animal, because he ("Carlsbad") has five crosses of blood already.

11706. If you had a horse of the same crossing as "Carlsbad," with plenty of bone and muscle, and altogether a hunter-shaped animal, would you use that horse in preference to a Hackney?—I would use him in preference to any horse living, because I think you want to breed hunters from hunters.

11707. Mr. FITZWILLIAM. — Do you keep your stallions at your own place?—They travel.

11708. But they travel from your own place?—The headquarters are at home, but they are not all at home. During the season I have them all over the country.

11709. You have Clydesdales?—I have Clydesdales and Shires, too.

11710. Lord ASHTOWN.—To what sort of mares do you put your thoroughbred sire?—Of course there are a certain number of people who will have a thoroughbred, it does not matter whether it is a really good one or not.

11711. You say people send you mares and ask you to put them to which you think best?—That all depends on the mare; if a man sends a lightish mare to my place and leaves the selection of the stallion to myself, then I select a horse that I think is likely to help the man to pay his rent.

11712. What I rather wanted to get was—to which mare you would put the Hackney, to which you

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would put the half-bred, and to which you would put the thoroughbred?—If a first-class hunter mare was sent to me I should certainly put her to a hunter stallion; but if a mare on the light side was sent to me I would put her to a horse with bone and substance, and you can get a Hackney with good shoulders and as much bone and substance as you want.

11713. In breeding from a thoroughbred you are bound to get some weeds—do you think if that filly was put again to a Hackney the produce would be saleable?—I have had weedy mares sent to me, and the owner says:—"Tell Mr. Trotter to put this mare to anything he likes," then I mate her to a big Hackney stallion, and she often breeds a first-class foal.

11714. They will breed a saleable animal?—Yes; it is the weeds eat the profit up.

11715. There are big coarse heavy mares—you would not put a half-bred stallion to them?—Oh, no. I have had thoroughbred stallions that left very good stock indeed from the coarser mares in the country, such a horse as "King Harold" and "Haphazard," but I never bought a thoroughbred stallion yet unless I knew he was a good getter before I bought him.

11716. A mare that was known to breed well to a thoroughbred, you would not change her?—No; if she succeeded in breeding well to one thoroughbred horse, I would keep her at it. I don't believe in changing if you once hit the right nail on the head.

11717. Mr. CAREW.—You said you were in favour of registration of half-breds?—Yes; I think registration is a very useful thing if you can only amalgamate individual merit with it.

11718. What do you mean by merit?—I mean, of course, if you had a really first-class hunter mare that you had owned for years, and knew she was sound, although you knew nothing of her breeding, you would have to adopt either show-yard success or inspection or something of that sort.

11719. Then you don't mean by merit performance in the hunting field?—Oh, yes, I said performance. I think you could easily get at the stallion part of it by giving stakes for hunter stallions, or by giving prizes for, say, the best two-year-old hunter colt; you should have them from sound parents.

11720. Mr. WRENCH.—What class of farmers use your Hackney stallions now?—As a rule they are the smaller farmers. You see we get a large number of mares from the North and West of Ireland into Newcastle and the North of England; there is a lot of them shown with long tails, and the farmers buy up these mares, often young mares, and then after they have been worked in a town awhile they come back to the farmers—and those are the mares that are put to Hackney stallions.

11721. You know that there are a large number of mares that come from Ireland put to Hackney stallions?—Yes.

11722. What do they produce?—Nearly all of them produce an animal better than themselves.

11723. Do they produce a saleable animal, an animal that pays?—Yes.

11724. When you talk of a small farmer in your district, what is his rent?—Tyneside, and practically the whole of Northumberland, is a country where there are various classes; you have the big farmers in the valleys, and when you get into the little dales away from the seaboard, you get amongst the smaller farmers, who are farming one hundred acres, and perhaps some hill land with it.

11725. What would be their rent?—They often have a small grass farm and some hill ground in connection with it; they get often a little cross-bred mare to cut their grass and do any carting they may have to do, and often put her to a Hackney stallion.

11726. And those are the men that chiefly use your Hackney stallion?—No, not necessarily so; there are some large farmers will use them as well.

11727. Are many high-class harness horses bred from them?—Yes

11728. If you wish to breed for the London market high-class harness horses, what stallion would you use?—I would either use a large-sized Hackney or a Yorkshire coach-horse.

11729. Would you use a thoroughbred?—No.

11730. Do you keep any Yorkshire coach-horses yourself?—I have used them.

11731. Why would you not use a thoroughbred?—Because he has not got the action.

11732. Do you think it is necessary to have the action?—Undoubtedly.

11733. I suppose the farmers you call small are hardly as small as the farmers in Ireland?—No; a lot of the small farmers from the West of Ireland come to us and work all the summer to get something to pay the rent with.

11734. Do you know that seventy-five per cent. of the farmers of Ireland are under £20 valuation?—No, I did not know that; that is news to me.

11735. Putting hunter breeding aside altogether from such men as that, what sire do you think would be most useful to them?—Undoubtedly a Hackney.

11736. Why?—My idea of the small mares kept by these men are, that they are mares probably from fourteen to fifteen hands, not extra good-looking or extra good movers; if you use a Hackney stallion you get the Hackney type and the Hackney action, and if you have that you have a saleable animal.

11737. Then you think for £ s. d. they would make a good deal more breeding from a Hackney or the other horse you describe?—I have seen some remarkably good results from using a coaching stallion, for this very good reason, you have got more size and length, and you have a blood bay with four black legs, which is an advantage, and you have almost as much action.

11738. How big are coaching stallions as a rule?—I bought a horse the other day that won first prize at Leicester Royal Show, 16.1 hands at three year old, a whole coloured blood bay.

11739. Would you be inclined to put him to fourteen hands mares?—When you come down to fourteen hands, I should certainly say a Hackney, but for a fifteen hands mare I would prefer a coach-horse. There is this disadvantage in using a Hackney, you sometimes get a good deal too much white, and if you use a coach-horse, you often get an animal that is whole-coloured, which is a decided advantage for a London horse.

11740. You think the cross of 16.1 hands and 15 hands is not too great?—Certainly not.

11741. I think you said that you had experience of riding hunters yourself got by Hackney stallions?—Yes.

11742. Did you find them deficient in staying powers?—Certainly not.

11743. Do you think there is anything in the allegation that Hackneys are soft?—I think they are the hardest horses I have.

11744. And you have considerable experience; are they hardy in constitution?—Very, and very sound.

11745. Have you seen the crosses got by Hackneys living out on these hills you said?—Oh, yes.

11746. How do they stand the climate there?—They do very well; and we have a much worse climate in the North-east coast of England than you have in Ireland.

11747. And they remain out all the winter?—Oh, yes.

11748. Then take these small farmers—what do you think is the safest horse-breeding for them to go in for, for the harness market or the hunting market?—Certainly to cater for the harness market from the undersized mares.

11749. I am not referring to the good mares at all?—Of course I am assuming that my idea of the average mare in your country districts is correct, and that is, that it is an animal from 14 to 15 hands rather plain-looking, without much action.

11750. Assuming such an animal, do you think they would get the best results from a Hackney

stallion or a horse like "Carlsbad"?—Certainly, from a Hackney stallion I think you would get a much better-paying animal for this reason—that you can sell a first-class harness horse with his long tail on for a lot of money. London men will buy them, and give £100 for a harness horse without being broke. But if you breed a hunter you must make him before you can sell him to any advantage.

11751. Do those London dealers care how an animal is bred?—Not a copper, if they can get them.

11752. They would not object if they were by a Hackney?—No. I know a gentleman he is willing to give £5,000 for fifty high-class harness horses if he can get them.

11753. Is it easy to find hunter sires of the type of "Carlsbad"?—I have not seen any but mine.

11754. You know "New Oswestry"?—He is by the same stallion, and Mr. Muntz tells me he is a very good horse.

11755. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Is there not a horse of the same kind called "Morocco"?—There was a thoroughbred horse called "Morocco." At the Dublin Show there was an animal got second prize in the hunter class by "Excelsior." I have every reason to believe that was got by the Limavady Stud Hackney. You were asking Mr. Bainbridge about a crossing of the Hackney. Now "Excelsior" was got by "Reality," and "Reality" was out of a mare by a thoroughbred horse. Then "Excelsior" himself was bred from inspected stock, so he is very much cross-bred, but a first-class animal.

11756. Mr. WRENCH.—Is there much thoroughbred blood in the back breeding of the best strain of Hackneys?—I know of some Hackney stallions that have thoroughbred blood in them closely.

11757. You hunt a great deal yourself?—As much as ever I can.

11758. Which blood would you dislike most in the hunter—Clydesdale blood, Shire blood, or Hackney blood?—I should certainly take Hackney. I have seen some clouting good hunters got by Clydesdales.

11759. When you say you would take Hackney, would you dislike that the most or least?—The least.

11760. Would you prefer Hackney blood in the hunter to Clydesdale or Shire?—Undoubtedly.

11761. It is necessary sometimes in order to get weight in hunters to bring in cart blood?—I know four or five of the best heavy hunters I have seen got by cart stallions out of thoroughbred mares.

11762. Have you tried breeding hunters with thoroughbred horses?—Oh, yes. I have kept thoroughbred stallions for over twenty years, twenty-three or twenty-four.

11763. Used you to keep more than you keep now?—I have never kept more than one or two.

11764. What result had your breeding from thoroughbred stallions?—There have been some very good animals, indeed from strongish mares.

11765. Were those mares with any cart blood in them?—Oh, yes.

11766. But I mean from mares without any cart blood in them, have you ever bred any with thoroughbred horses from these mares?—Yes, I have bred some very good hunters. According to Mr. John Henry Stokes' opinion, he buys in the North of England, he says he gets no horses like them—Stokes, of Market Harborough.

11767. How are those bred?—Most of them by thoroughbred stallions off the average mares of the country.

11768. And the average mares of the country have cart blood in them?—Undoubtedly.

11769. Have you any other instances of the result of Hackney crosses from other people?—I have a note of seven Hackney stallions that I have owned and all of them have got some good hunters except one good horse, and I just kept him standing at home; I don't know of a good hunter by him, but all the rest have got hunters, all the six.

11770. And with what class of mares did they get the best?—Well, "Octavian" got a very good horse out of a hunter mare, a bloody hunter mare, he is seventeen years old and still serviceable. "Fireaway Charley" got that fourteen-year-old hunter I told you about, he has been hunted ten years and still serviceable. "Masterpiece," a big-sized Norfolk horse, a neighbour of mine put a rather weedy blood mare to him, and her foal I bought at four-year-old and sold it to Mr. Burton in London, it was a clinking good hunter. "Worcester Sauce," I have only had him four seasons, I saw a four-year-old grey horse by him the other day, out of a little plain ponified mare, and he is going very well. His mother was only 14.2 hands, he is not a big one. "Perfection IV.," I only travelled that horse a little one season, I had him three seasons, but I saw a black brown gelding by him shown at our show last year, a very good horse, and I asked one of the judges how he liked it, and he said "very well, he gallops very fast; he is got by your old horse, is he not?" "What horse do you mean?" "'Hap-hazard.'" "No," I said, "he is got by a Yorkshire coach-horse, 'Climax,' that is the way he is bred."

11771. Lord ASHTOWN.—What was the mare by the Yorkshire coach-horse out of?—Out of a mare by a thoroughbred horse.

11772. Mr. WRENCH.—You say you have been to the Irish shows and bought Irish horses on several occasions?—Yes.

11773. Would you suggest for the improvement of hunters in Ireland that more horses like "Carlsbad" should be registered?—Please yourself about registration, but I should certainly say the more of them you use the better.

11774. Better than a thoroughbred horse?—Undoubtedly.

11775. CHAIRMAN.—When you say better than a thoroughbred horse, do you mean better than any thoroughbred horse, a thoroughbred equal in bone and substance to your horse?—The bulk of thoroughbred horses are not of the hunter type, and if you are breeding from animals of a dissimilar type from the animal you want to breed, the chances are you don't succeed, but if you breed from hunter stallions which are of the type you want to breed the chance is you will succeed.

11776. That is to say if you could find a thoroughbred of the same type would you still prefer the half-bred to the thoroughbred?—I should certainly do so for this reason, that unless I knew the mare the thoroughbred horse was out of it is a leap in the dark, because we know many thoroughbred mares with funny legs on them and noisy to boot; they may breed a big horse, but I should say that that horse would be unreliable, because he had not a good mother.

11777. Then to breed a hunter out of any sort of mare you prefer a half-bred to a thoroughbred?—I don't say so; for legitimate hunter breeding I should breed from a hunter stallion and hunter mare, because in both sire and dam you have arrived nearer at the state of perfection you wish to attain, but in going back to the thoroughbred you are bringing in a class of animal that perhaps you don't want.

11778. Then it does come to what I say, that for any class of mare for breeding hunters you would prefer a half-bred or hunter sire to a thoroughbred?—I don't mean that; for a coarse or underbred mare I should pick a nice type of short-backed thoroughbred horse.

11779. I take it you are not personally acquainted with the congested districts in Ireland?—Well, I have never been in them, but we have had ever since I can remember men coming from there to work and very intelligent men, too, and I get to know pretty well the sort of horse they breed, and I may say that these men told me that these Hackney stallions are doing a great deal of good, but personally I have not seen the result.

11780. You have only a general idea of their condition and the holdings they have. You were asked

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about their rental, you cannot speak authoritatively?—I have talked to these men about the rents they pay, but I have not a good memory for figures. I know they are small farmers, and nearly all keep a little mare. I have seen the animals that come from the district. I can form a general idea of the stallions that should be put to them.

11781. You say that judging from the class of mare they have and the circumstances of these farmers you think that with a Hackney sire they can produce a more saleable animal?—A much more saleable animal.

11782. You mentioned a first-class harness horse that would fetch £100. Do you think these small farmers would, under any circumstances with the mares they have, with any kind of sire, be likely to produce a harness horse worth £100?—Well, I don't see why they should not. I know there was a Frenchman paid £300 for a 14.2 hands mare in the Hall yesterday. She is got by a Hackney stallion out of a mare of unknown breeding. If you get them good enough looking and fine goers you will always get customers.

11783. We have had evidence before us from some people interested in that business that for certain purposes the highest class carriage horses they can get are got by thoroughbred sires?—I have that to learn yet.

11784. As far as you know you would prefer to use the Hackney?—I would prefer to use the Hackney or Yorkshire coach horse, because you have the animal there pretty nearly what you want.

11785. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—With regard to breeding, from all you have said I have gathered that you prefer, or rather you put greater stress on the appearance of the animal than you do on the blood of the animal?—The appearance and the performance of the animal.

11786. As a stallion?—Well, I said I would prefer to use a hunter stallion from a really first-class hunting mare, assuming he was a first-class horse himself. It is not a mere theoretical opinion. It is based upon my own experience of hunter stallions.

11787. But still your preference is for appearance?—If you leave individual merit out, you leave the principal factor out.

11788. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Are your Hackney stallions of the hunter type?—All my Hackney stallions have good shoulders and good limbs.

11789. Then do you go in for very high action?—Get as much action as ever you can, because they are sure to breed plenty with too little.

11790. Do you like the pounding?—I like them to go up and go on.

11791. Besides breeding, do you buy and sell many horses?—A few.

11792. Do you know Ireland well yourself?—Well, I cannot say I know Ireland well myself, but I have been at the Dublin Show many times, and got a fair idea of the animals produced there, and also from seeing a lot of horses that come from Ireland.

11793. How do you know that the small farmers in Ireland have only small mares?—Judging from the animals they sell to us.

11794. That is, from the produce of their animals you think the mares must be small?—I have asked Mr. Wrench if my idea of the average mare in the West of Ireland was correct, a plainish mare of 14 to 15 hands, and not a good mover.

11795. That is the West of Ireland. But all over Ireland do you mean to say the generality of small farmers have small mares?—I understand that most of the small farmers keep a mare, and they are not very big.

11796. How do you form that idea. Why?—From a variety of sources.

11797. By hearsay?—I have seen a lot of them myself, and spoken with them—small farmers.

11798. From hearsay?—I don't know whether it is correct to say from hearsay, because it is not strictly speaking from hearsay. I see two or three hundred horses that come from Ireland every year, and can form my own idea.

11799. Do you see many brood mares?—Well, you see these undersized mares that are subsequently put to breeding.

11800. In England?—Yes, plenty of them. I have seen men bring forty at a time of these small Irish mares.

11801. Do you believe a prize in a showyard is a proof of a good hunter?—Certainly not.

11802. Lord ASHTOWN.—With reference to this half-bred cross that Mr. Fitzwilliam asked you about, you say although you like personal appearance you would be still better pleased if you had personal appearance and breeding?—Oh, yes, I am not at all an advocate for underbred animals, but the hunter stallions I use have both been first-class performers. I hunted one and the other had won eleven steeplechases, so there was a prepotency to jump undoubtedly.

11803. You would prefer that animal to an animal that was only good looking and of which you did not know his breeding?—Undoubtedly, because I am certain of this that the propensity to jump is an hereditary accomplishment.

11804. When you say you prefer these half-bred stallions to the thoroughbred you mean from a commercial point of view?—That is the thing, from a profitable point of view.

11805. You would breed a better average of profitable horses?—Undoubtedly.

Mr. Alexander Morton, J.P.

Mr. ALEXANDER MORTON, J.P., Darvel, Ayr, examined.

11806. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You live at Darvel, Ayrshire?—Yes, my lord. This morning I put my evidence on paper and if you will take it I will—it puts my views better than I could give them orally. I am a lace and carpet manufacturer, and employ about one thousand hands. Since my earliest days I have been a lover of the horse. When a boy of eleven I knew every horse in the parish by name and look. For twenty years afterwards I confined myself strictly to my business, but after getting a little out of the wood and requiring some relaxation, my old love for the horse sprang up anew. I bought a few half-bred mares or mares bred on the hunter lines by a thoroughbred horse. Following this I bought a thoroughbred stallion from Mr. Tattersall, named "Clansman," which I for several years used. The production of these mares by this horse I showed over the West of Scotland with moderate success. As far as I can remember I sold them at from forty to sixty pounds at four years of age. One reached seventy pounds, but unfortunately when put to work she went wrong in her wind, and I had to give twenty pounds back. About this time there was exhibited at the Highland and Agricultural Show in Glasgow a blue roan mare called "Lady Patrington," by "Lord Derby II.," one of his very first gets. I was so captivated with the quality, action, and style of this mare, that I resolved to trace her to the bottom, and before a week's end I was found at Waxholm, Withernsea, Yorks, inspecting "Lord Derby II." and Collingson's old grey blood mare. I bought two out of her, and purchased in all nine young ones—colts and fillies—by "Lord Derby II." These laid the foundation of the Hackney in Scotland, which has now grown to over 1,000 for breeding purposes, my own stud being considerably over 200. My yearly increase in foals now runs from forty to fifty These animals I exhibited over Scotland against

those bred in the country by thoroughbred horses, under the classes "Road or Field." This we found very unsatisfactory, as judges that went for hunting took those by the thoroughbred, and those who used harness horses invariably took my stepping hacks, but in a year or two others followed me in importing Hackneys, and on the forming of the Hackney Committee in Scotland (whereof I am chairman), we got established the two classes, namely, the hunter and the Hackney, which have worked very successfully there, often being from twenty to thirty in each class of yearlings, two year and three year old. Now, the hunting gentlemen confine themselves to those by the thoroughbred, and those interested in harness and hacks confine themselves to the Hackney. During these years I carefully studied the origin of the Hackney, and found that his blood was as pure as that of the thoroughbred, and that both, to the extent of about three-fourths (of their blood) sprang from the imported Arabian and Barb horses. I am the author of two or three papers bearing on this point, which I beg to hand in for your consideration. I also had the pleasure of drawing up a genealogical tree from the year 1702, showing the beginning of the breed and its growth to the present day, which I also hand in for your perusal. I may say that this paper and tree have been much inquired for, and that thousands thereof have by special request been reprinted and circulated all over the English speaking nations—so much for the introduction of the Hackney into Scotland. It may, however, be more to the present point of consideration to say something about how these Hackneys have done in Scotland and to inquire whether they have paid. I am not prepared to say that I have made money by them—indeed I do not know of any hobby that *does* pay—but I feel convinced if I had to make a business of Hackney breeding and watch every item, as business must be done, the balance would be on the credit side of the ledger. There is a better market for this animal, and it can be bred with greater safety to type and size than any horse in our country. I may be allowed in this connection to say that I have sold within these last five years over 200 Hackneys and ponies nearly all bred by myself. The ponies averaged over fifty guineas each, and the Hackneys over one hundred guineas each—all ages. I have sold a number of horses out of hunting mares by Hackney stallions at 120 to 150 guineas each, and in several cases I have obtained from 400 to 500 guineas for matched pairs bred in this way and out of light legged cart mares by a pure Hackney stallion. During these last ten or twelve years I have kept for my own and the district's use one Hackney pony and three or four large pure-bred Hackney stallions. I charge from two to five guineas each mare, and I am very pleased indeed to see the great improvement of the harness horse all over Scotland. Every year I get mares sent to my stud from distances of two to three hundred miles, and I can see that in a few years we will supply the growing demand for our carriage and harness work, and may even be able to sell some to our neighbours, while up till this time nearly all have been imported. I might here be excused for referring to horse breeding in Ireland. I have attended the Dublin Horse Show, and was immensely pleased with the hunters I saw there. I felt and said they were the cleverest and finest animals I had ever seen. I am still of the same opinion, and I wish them good luck. If the introduction of the Hackney into Ireland were in any way to interfere with these beautiful hunters I would be at one with those opposed to the Hackney being introduced into the country, as I do not believe the Hackney blood mixed with the hunters would improve their hunting qualities. In Great Britain we have no difficulty in keeping our breeds of horses and cattle pure and distinct, especially since the establishment of stud books, and I cannot see why the same should not be managed in Ireland. In visiting a number of the breeding establishments in the West of Ireland I found a great many very light blood mares being kept for breeding and still being used with thoroughbred horses. Most of their stock was unsuitable for the hunting field, and had to be sold for what they could bring, say from £15 to £20, to go into a hansom or jaunting car. Now I feel sure if these mares were put to a powerful, true-bred, high-stepping Hackney they would produce the finest carriage horses in the world, and they would find a ready market amongst our best and highest class London dealers at remunerative prices on account of their quality and action. By Ireland denying itself the use of the Hackney stallion these mares remain of little or no use for breeding purposes, and it prevents the production of the horse which would find the best and readiest market in this or any other country. I think I am safe in saying that for every hunter used there are at least twenty harness and carriage horses, and why should the best breeding country in the world be closed against this large and valuable business, for surely Ireland can do with more of it, and allow good money to go to foreign parts for animals not half so valuable for the purpose.

11807. I take it from this document that you have bred chiefly pure-bred Hackneys?—Yes, of recent years I have bred pure-bred Hackneys, but in the earlier part I had not sufficient mares to use and I used some half-bred ones then with my Hackney stallions. I have bred both, but these last few years I have bred purely with Hackneys. A great many of my friends in the district that have half-bred mares use my stallions.

11808. What class of half-bred mares as a rule?—They are mostly mares that come over from Ireland that were misfits for hunters, they might be either wrong in breaking or did not find a high-class market, and were bought for £20 or £30, and sold in our district for harness work.

11809. What is the produce like?—My neighbour within half a mile of my house bred two or three out of one of these mares by a thoroughbred horse and never could make much out of them, because they came out rather light, but he has used these last few years my stepping stallions, and I am pleased to say the first produce he had he sold for eighty guineas.

11810. Lord ASHTOWN.—What age?—Four years of age. I could instance several cases. I have bought myself a good many of these animals round, given £60 and more for them when just coming four, to handle and break and bring them in for my sales, and those that I refer to there as having sold at from £120 up to £400 were animals that I really bought, young animals, but knew the class of mares they were out of.

11811. Lord RATHDONNELL. — Are there any hounds near you?—The Ayrshire hounds come up within three or four miles of my place, it is more west.

11812. How far are you from Glasgow?—Twenty miles south. I live in Loudoun parish; the Eglinton hounds come up as far as Cessnock.

11813. Are the Renfrew hounds near you?—They are further north; I never see them.

11814. You referred to certain breeding studs in the West of Ireland, what breeding studs do you refer to?—I stayed a week in that district I went down by Carlow, Limerick, by Killarney, and Cork. I had one or two of my family with me, they were enjoying themselves at the Lakes, but I was going through the country seeing the mares. I could not give you the names of the farmers, but I just went from farm to farm, one day one place and one day another, and saw a lot of mares, they were beautiful mares a good many, but rather light.

11815. You have used the word "studs," I thought you meant large breeding studs?—It was more farmers' mares really, there might be two or three in each of these places I visited.

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11816. Did you mention Cork?—Yes; I was not as far down as Cork, I was down in the district between Limerick and Cork; it is a matter of ten or twelve years since I was down there, it was shortly after I commenced with the Hackneys. I went to Kildare, it is a straggling open village with an old round tower where a fire we were told had been burning for 500 or 600 years. Of course it was not burning when I was there.

11817. Did you go to any farmers in the neighbourhood of Kildare?—I went to two or three different farmers, and I saw two lovely mares, almost like thoroughbreds; beautiful quality, deep-hearted, fine mares, but the young stock were too light for producing hunters.

11818. You did not go to any of the racing establishments at the Curragh?—No; I know little about racing stock myself. I had been troubled previous to that with these Irish foals being brought over year after year and beating me when I was breeding from my own "Clansman" horse, and I went over to see if I could see the cause, and perhaps buy one or two. They seemed to be too light, and then I could not find out the right strain. I have visited the Dublin Show since then several times.

11819. With regard to your own breeding, you say you breed a great many every year?—Yes.

11820. Out of that number I suppose all of them are not plums?—No; we never have that.

11821. What do you do with those that are misfits?—We sell them the best we can. We don't continue to breed from them. We sell them for from £40 to £60. What I gave there was my average, putting bad and good together. I have sold them as low as £30, and as high as 3,000 guineas, Hackneys, but I put the good and bad together of five years production.

11822. Where do the misfits go to?—They are used for doctors' ponies, and ordinary jobbing hacks that do not go to such a high class. For instance, Gemmel, in Ayr, buys one or two occasionally, and I sold to Giffen, and he would sell them for jobbing purposes.

11823. Are they not good for agricultural purposes?—Yes; in light land. I use myself two or three mares constantly during the winter for light work, taking out manure and ploughing. I keep one big strong mare for very heavy work. But all my ordinary work is done by Hackney mares. "Old Daisy" and "Lady Dorington" are ploughing within a day of foaling.

11824. Are the Hackneys you use for driving purposes or as riding horses?—I drive myself Hackneys.

11825. There are Hackneys and Hackneys; some people call them roadsters?—It is a broad term. The Hackneys that I have used for some years are pure Hackneys. I drove one last year for a fortnight all over the South of Scotland.

11826. What strain of Hackney?—Pure Yorkshire Hackneys. I have scarcely a drop of Norfolk blood in my stud. I had one or two at first. I was carried away by their action, and after I got them home I could not bear them, having no staying power or stamina.

11827. You think the Yorkshire Hackney is superior to the Norfolk?—Yes, I don't see why it should be so. I find in the early part of the seventeenth century there were a great many Arabian horses spread over Yorkshire. I think that has laid the foundation of the superior class of Hackneys they have in Yorkshire. We commence the stud book with "Blaze." Well, "Blaze" was used on mares that were perhaps half Arabian before that, from the large infusion of the Arabian blood introduced fifty or sixty years previous to "Blaze's" time. You will find that there were forty Arabian stallions introduced into Yorkshire in Queen Anne's reign.

11828. To come down nearer to our times what is the difference in the quality and conformation of the Yorkshire Hackney from the Norfolk Hackney?—I find that the Norfolk Hackney is very much commoner about his shoulder and his head, he is not a riding horse, and I don't think he is even a proper driving horse, that is, a certain strain of them, and I have driven one or two and thought shame of the name of Hackney belonging to them. They are not true, the effusion of foreign blood having got in among the Hackneys in Norfolk and done a great deal of injury to the name of Hackney. I feel sure myself that the true Hackney is just as pure and genuine after a careful examination of the early pedigrees of the horse as the thoroughbred is himself. He is from the same foundation and the same stock, and we have thus two lines from the same original one producing the flat racer, and the other ending in a riding and driving horse.

11829. Is there not now a Hackney Stud Book?—It has been compiled for the last dozen years, going back to about the year 1740 for our foundation. We had to grapple with several things, and no doubt one or two have got in which had we known what they were would not have been allowed in.

11830. Is that Stud Book closed?—No, every year they are still going on, the membership is higher than ever, and the entries are still increasing, it is closed for new animals and has been for a number of years.

11831. The English Hackney Stud Book?—Yes, as far as Hackneys are concerned it has been closed for five or six years, but they still allow inspected ponies.

11832. Still it is not closed if they admit Hackney ponies?—They still admit what may be called ponies under a certain size inspected by competent judges, suitable to be bred with Hackney sires.

11833. Supposing that mare was put to a Hackney sire and bred a larger animal than the limit at the present moment for entry, can that animal get into the Stud Book?—I believe that animal would be allowed into the Stud Book as having foundation from the pony.

11834. Then it would come from the pony class and go into the actual Stud Book?—Being admitted as the production of a certain pony that was inspected.

11835. It would not require inspection to go in?—No.

11836. Therefore the Stud Book is not closed?—It is not closed in that side way. For several years after it was established we had what was called inspected mares. We had a council over England and Scotland, and I believe Ireland, for inspecting mares that were suitable for breeding Hackneys. For some four or five years, that has been stopped, so that it is closed as far as ordinary mares are concerned. But there is a motion tabled by Sir Gilbert Greenall now to close even the inspection of pony stallions.

11837. What has been your experience of the Hackney as regards staying powers?—I was going to say that I drove last year one for a fortnight, on a driving tour I had round the south and west of Scotland, Dumfries, Dumfriesshire, Kircudbrightshire, and Wigtown, and when I got home I had done on an average twenty-eight miles per day while I was out. It was a cob by "Lord Derby" out of a little Denmark mare, a little roan cob, 14.2 to 14.3. He went as cocky and sharp the whole time that it was a perfect pleasure to sit behind him.

11838. I suppose you did not take the worst one?—No, it is the one I like to drive. I had just as much pleasure to sit behind him when he was walking as when he was going fast.

11839. As a general rule have you found the same thing?—Yes, of the Hackneys of Yorkshire, as regards Norfolk Hackneys a good proportion of them have been bred by "Confidence," and those who have bred from him have cursed the name of that horse. It would have been worth thousands of pounds to the Hackney world if that horse had been killed the day he was born. I have

driven the Yorkshires, on the other hand, one by "Lord Derby" out of an old mare that had a strain of thoroughbred in her by her dam. I have driven her time after time to Lanark and back, which is thirty-two miles, making over sixty miles in a single trip. I have also driven that mare to Motherwell and back in a day, and to Glasgow and back. Her mother was by a thoroughbred horse and her sire was a pure Hackney, her name is "Nancy."

11840. You think a cross of thoroughbred is rather a good thing?—I don't think it is an objection for staying powers. I don't prefer it for continuing the breed, because I am sure to get action if I stick true to the Hackney; but we get as good results from a stallion out of a mare that is by a thoroughbred to sell the produce, not to lay the foundation of a stock.

11841. Lord ASHTOWN.—You mean a Hackney put on a mare by a thoroughbred?—Yes.

11842. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Do you think it is a good thing to go on breeding from the produce of that?—It does very well, but you would not have the security of getting everyone to come like peas as I have out of my own Hackney mares.

11843. That is pure-bred, but the cross breeding?—If you have a stud of good mares and don't want to reproduce them again but to sell the produce, they will pay very well.

11844. But the produce of those?—Only for mares, and use always the pure-bred Hackney stallion; not to use the stallion that is half-bred, but a pure bred, and rather inbred. I always like to have him a little inbred, to stamp himself, and give character and give action.

11845. Have you seen the produce of these half-bred mares?—I have just said that I have sold them for £400 the pair.

11846. That is the produce of the half-bred mares?—Of the mares by a thoroughbred horse out of either a Hackney mare or a stronger mare.

11847. And crossed again by a Hackney?—And crossed again by a Hackney. This mare that I drove from Lanark and back, and used as a mare for many years, is bred in that way; her grand-dam was by "Old Wildfire," her mother was by a thoroughbred horse, and she herself was by "Lord Derby," that has been the best mare I ever owned for real value.

11848. Have you put her to the stud?—I have bred two out of her.

11849. What is her produce?—One of them is a gelding by "Goldfinder." He has taken to his grand-dam, and has a little more of the thoroughbred in him, and does not bend his knees.

11850. Lord ASHTOWN.—About the stud book, although things are passed in still as inspected, still any man who looks back in the stud book can trace that they do come from the inspected mares?—Oh, yes; they are always mentioned.

11851. So that it is entirely optional with you if you wish to buy the produce of an inspected mare?—Oh, yes; there is a bracket put on to show that the horse has a stain.

11852. That would not throw a permanent stain on the Hackney?—I find in reading Joe Osborne on "Eclipse," that there are thirteen parts out of thirty-two that they cannot account for even in his breeding.

11853. But still you would not be buying that stain with your eyes shut?—No, they would see there were so many crosses that they could not tell.

11854. You have had experience of crossing Hackneys and ponies?—Yes, I have done a good deal of that, perhaps more than any man in Scotland or England. I bred some from our own ponies, the Scotch ponies; those were not so good. I went to Wales, and picked up a good many Welsh ponies. I bought thirty-six in one lot, four or five years ago, and I put my Hackney stallion "Goldfinder" on these ponies, and I have some of the loveliest ponies coming on, in fact I sold one the other day, a gelding just broken, for £60, in the rough I may say. I will have fifty coming on. Of course I am selling the Welsh mares. I think I have sixteen of these still. The ponies are 13.2 hands from the Hackney stallion and these little mares, and I mean them to form the foundation of the pony breeding.

11855. Do you find these ponies hardy?—I have not had a great deal of experience.

11856. Not for work but for keep?—Oh, yes, I have them on the hill, and we only give them hay and a little linseed mixed with hay chopped up.

11857. What sort of pasture; ordinary hill pasture?—It is pasture that has really been wrought once, perhaps ploughed; a little heathery, but not bad; pretty dry. Then I have a big shed outside where they can run in at night, if it is very rough.

11858. We know about "Confidence," but there are rather good strains in the Norfolk Hackney?—Yes, I don't censure all Norfolk Hackneys. There is a strain belonging to Peacock, that strains to "Old Kitty" and "Norfolk Gentleman," a most useful strain I believe to use for Irish mares. I say, after carefully thinking it over, that if I was in Ireland that is the strain I would use. They are true-bred for three or four generations, and when they go back to anything else it is to the thoroughbred. They are great goers, with powerful limbs and deep shoulders, and would make beautiful carriage horses with the light Irish mares. I have several in my stud. I am trying to raise the standard of height of my Hackneys, and I am pleased to say with the using of Peacocke's strain, I have now eight or ten Hackneys from 15.3 to 16 hands.

11859. That is "Rufus'" strain?—Yes, but the old "Norfolk Gentleman" is better, he was "Rufus'" grandfather.

11860. "Confidence" was of a capital Norfolk strain?—I am pleased to say that Peacocke's father would not be enticed with his action, and they only used that strain twice.

11861. They used "Reality"?—Yes, but I believe his stock is now clear of the "Confidence" blood.

11862. Mr. WRENCH.—You have been a great deal about Yorkshire?—Yes, many and many a time.

11863. When you were there you inquired a great deal about the way in which Hackneys were bred from the old farmers there?—Yes, of course, from the old men. It was really a passion with me. I got so fond of them that anybody that could blether to me about Hackneys I was there. My business took me up to Yorkshire a good deal. I went to Leeds and Bradford in the way of business, and I made it convenient to go down and see the farmers.

11864. Then although the Stud Book was only formed comparatively recently, have you any reason to believe that the pedigrees given in it are as a rule not correct?—I believe myself that there are stains, as there are stains in the old original thoroughbred stud book, but mostly I believe it is correct, and my greatest proof is this, that I have bred now for twelve or fifteen years from these Yorkshire strains, and they come year after year almost exactly alike. I could tell them just by seeing them what they were. Now, if they were cross-bred and common-bred and bad blood they would produce all sorts of things. I was in America last back-end, spent seven weeks there, and I went to see some of the studs. I went up to Cassatt's and saw that stud of his. I saw in one field about seventeen or eighteen colts by "Cadet" out of their own native mares, and he had such power by the purity of his own blood that they were like a handful of peas. I never saw a lot so much alike. They were all chestnuts, and the mares were different colours, browns and bays. The colts all took to himself in colour and type.

11865. And were there not a good many families in Yorkshire specially celebrated for their breeds of horses?—Yes, old Rickells and Crompton and Smith, it was quite a pleasure to stay and listen to them telling of their favourite Hackneys and how they were bred, away back sixty or seventy years.

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11866. Were those animals that they bred from there noted for doing long distances and hard work in those days?—They spoke of going to market and doing great journeys, I did not pay so much attention, but they used to brag how they walked with their head and tail up, and the old man would get up and show you by his walk their gait and style.

11867. Were you able to find out that there was any soft blood in Yorkshire Hackneys?—I have never seen it or heard of it. I have had a great deal to do with what we call the leading blood, "Lord Derby's," I have sold 100 horses by him, I have sent them to America and Australia, and I have had nothing but the best reports. I have had a great many of old "Denmark's" and of "Fireaway's," those are the principal strains that have laid the foundations of Hackneys in Yorkshire. I would like to say regarding Peacocke's strain in Norfolk, and comparing them with the Hackneys, that while they are big, strong, useful horses for marketable purposes, they are not the horses for the show ring like the other horses. I am speaking of commercial value as regards breeding horses to put into the market to sell.

11868. Lord ASHTOWN.—You mean non-pedigreed Hackneys to sell as carriage horses?—But the Hackneys we are judging in the show ring were nine out of ten come from those three strains, "Lord Derby," "Denmark," and "Fireaway."

11869. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know whether there is a large trade between Scotland and Ireland?—There are still a good many bought.

11870. Do you think by the improvement of your breeding in Scotland you would injure that trade in Ireland?—They would pay me a much larger price, double in fact to the price they would pay for those coming over from the North of Ireland, I have no difficulty in selling them at good prices.

11871. I am referring entirely to half-breds?—I am meaning those horses that are bred by my Hackney sire, I care not what the mare is if the foal happens to be of the Hackney type and can go if it is a gelding. When I am going to have a sale I gather in two or three from my neighbours and am glad enough to buy one from a small farmer here and another from a farmer there because it puts faith in them, and induces them to go on breeding. I can break them better and put them in better shape, and they come and see at my sale that they have made good money.

11872. Do you find that there is any prejudice among the Scotch dealers against the Hackney blood except as far as "Confidence" is concerned?—No. I think there is one man has spoken pretty strongly against the Hackneys going into Ireland on account of being interested in buying the pure hunters; but the same gentleman is very fond of getting a pair of Hackneys when I can sell them at his price, and he is always ready when I have a pair to come and see them, and offer me a price. I won't mention his name, for he is a customer, and will be a customer.

11873. He does not find any fault with you on that account?—No; he would give me a much larger price for those than for ordinary carriage horses, either coming from the States or from Ireland, because they have some action.

11874. In the class of animal that a small farmer with a small weedy mare can breed do you think there is any better stallion than the Hackney?—Certainly not. I could tell you several instances wherein this has been most valuable. This mare I am speaking of, that I first saw, of Collingson's, was a little grey mare by a thoroughbred horse not over 15 hands, and the production of that mare in three years was over £1,000. There was £500 realized for this very mare that I saw first shown.

11875. That was merely cross-bred?—That was out of this little blood mare by "Lord Derby II." I gave him a very good price for the two I got, and within 200 yards of the same farm I bought two from Mr. Atkinson, of W——; one I called "Adam Bede" and the other "Lord Lossy." I sold both when two years of age; one for £150 and the other for £120. "Lord Lossy" went to Australia as a stallion, and he netted the gentleman that bought him from me 600 guineas. He got nearly £1,000 for him. He has been used in that country, and has spread a lot of first-class riding and driving horses since then. "Adam Bede," strange to say, in the year following followed him to Australia, but he was kept by the gentleman's brother that bought him from me, and he never went out to be public property. Those were both from a mare by a horse called "Snowdon Hill," a big, strong thoroughbred horse. The mare was a hunting type, showing the class of animal that could be bred from using a pure Hackney. They came each nearly 15.3 hands high, although "Lord Derby" himself was not over 15.1 hands.

11876. Have you ever bred Hackneys from thoroughbred mares or not?—Not pure thoroughbred mares. I never had a pure thoroughbred mare.

11877. Do you think that Hackneys are improving now or the reverse; is more trouble taken with their breeding or are they going back? I mean the general run of Hackneys?—I think there is a great improvement, I judged in London four years ago, and I judged this week again. I have also judged at the Royal and the Royal Lancashire, and I think there is a great increase in the merit and quality of the Hackney generally. I think our yearling class this year was not as good as I have seen it; but that will happen. Next year they may come up quite different. The three-year-old stallions over 15 hands was the best young class I ever saw in a show ring.

11878. Do you know at all whether there has been much trade in the show, whether there is a large demand for Hackneys?—I believe there have been several sold; they were in the parade, and my place, as judge, was to stand in the ring. I asked one or two were they sold, and they said, "Yes, I am pleased to say I have got mine sold," "and mine sold," and several have been sold since. Last year about twenty of these valuable stallions were sold; I cannot tell what quantity this year, but several have been sold both to home and foreign buyers. I might say regarding the Americans, if I be allowed, that I was at the New York Show, and I saw several of the studs; there are a lot of fine horses in America, but I thought from my standpoint they were a little bit light of bone and a little bit leggy, and I am sure in time the Americans will find that nothing can improve the value of their horses so much as using a Hackney stallion. The real trotting men are very jealous of interfering with their fast trotters, the same perhaps as hunting men would be; but for general value horses, to sell for carriage and harness work, nothing could do them so much good as using our Hackney stallions on their own home-mares.

11879. Do you think if they do that, they will, to a great degree, cut out the home trade in harness horses?—I cannot tell; if they can breed a good horse and sell a good horse, somebody will get the benefit of it. I would not object, it is like the oats and wheat, I am glad to see the good cheap stuff coming into the country. I think they will breed some good horses; I met a great many farmers west of Chicago that made a great trade in horses.

11880. Were you ever at one of the big sales in Chicago?—No; I did not go there.

11881. It is one of the largest horse markets in the world?—Yes; I met one of the auctioneers, and spent a night or two with him—he staggered me with a statement of the number of horses that passed through their hands.

11882. A number of American horses do come over to Scotland and affect the breeders?—Yes, they affect a certain class; but they are not appreciated, they are too leggy, they would not be bought. I had a long talk with a West End dealer here; he is a veterinary surgeon and dealer; he goes every fortnight

to Ireland to buy, and he had made up his mind, he said, never to buy an American horse again; he had nothing but disappointment, and it affected his position with his customers. I saw a team in New York of Hackneys by a Hackney horse out of their own mares, I thought they were as fine a team as ever I saw; that was in the New York Show—they were really charming.

11883. Lord RATHDONNELL.—There is one question I would like to ask you—I understood you to say that there is no soft blood in the Yorkshire Hackney?—Well, I have not found any myself. If there is any particular strain you would name, I could tell you whether I had experience of it.

11884. But it is rather a broad statement to make that there is no soft blood in any breed, because I suppose there is barely any breed of horse, thoroughbred or anything else, that has not some soft strain in it?—I have not found myself in the Yorkshire Hackney soft blood; of course, I have not driven so many myself, I have driven half a dozen different mares or horses—as many as I have used—but we break them mostly all in, and know before we get them finished whether they are soft or not.

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11885. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you had any complaints from the people you sell them to?—Never a word; these pair of brown horses I sold them to a linoleum manufacturer, he is a millionaire. I met him in the show, and he said, "Those horses have given me more pleasure than any I ever had, I would like to have another to make three, so that I could rest one if anything went wrong with it." These two were out of light Yorkshire cart mares by "Lord Derby."

11886. Is there anything else you wish to state?—No; I have made my statement on that paper.

The Commissioners adjourned.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY—WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10TH, 1897.

March 10, 1897.

Sitting at 12 Hanover-square, London, W.

Present—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P. (in the Chair); MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P.; HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM; MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE; MR. F. S. WRENCH; MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY, K.G.; LORD RATHDONNELL; COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

The EARL OF COVENTRY examined.

The Earl of Coventry.

11887. CHAIRMAN.—You are Master of Her Majesty's Buckhounds?—Yes.

11888. And for some years you were Master of fox hounds?—Yes, for many years.

11889. And you have judged horses in shows in England and Ireland?—Yes.

11890. Are you pretty well acquainted with Ireland generally as far as horse-breeding is concerned?—Yes, I am; I know Cork, Limerick, Tipperary, and Waterford.

11891. And the special parts of the country principally devoted to breeding hunters?—I think so.

11892. Have you yourself bought many Irish horses?—Yes, I have bought a great many during the past 30 years, almost entirely hunters.

11893. Have you bought any horses in Ireland for harness purposes?—I cannot remember having bought, perhaps, more than half a dozen for harness.

11894. In your opinion has the Irish horse any special value as a hunter?—Yes, I think he has; I think they are the best horses I know.

11895. To what do you attribute that?—Principally to their superior breeding and to the effect of the climate and soil of the country, which are so well adapted to the raising of horses.

11896. The soil and the climate would be equally well adapted, I presume, to the raising of harness horses or any kind of horses?—That may be so.

11897. Am I right in saying that you attribute the success of Ireland in breeding hunters largely to the blood?—Certainly, yes.

11898. That would be to a very large admixture of the thoroughbred blood?—Yes.

11899. Have you bought any horses as hunters which had any strain of cart-horse or Hackney in them?—In Ireland, no, I don't know that I have; I have in England, but not in Ireland to my knowledge.

11900. Am I to infer from that that you would not buy them in Ireland if to your knowledge they had Hackney blood or cart-horse blood in them?—Not if I knew it.

11901. You bought horses yourself in Ireland from the breeders?—Generally from the breeders. I used at one time when I was a Master of Hounds to attend a great many of the fairs in Ireland—Limerick, Cahirmee, Clonmel, Hospital, several of the principal fairs.

11902. Do you get pedigrees of the horses?—Nearly always, I always like to have a pedigree if I can.

11903. And you think they are reliable?—Oh, I think so; speaking generally.

11904. Are you able to form any opinion as to whether the supply is falling off in the fairs?—No, I have rather given up going to the fairs. I have not been for the last seven or eight years. I have not had to buy so many horses, and in consequence I have abandoned going to the fairs.

11905. Have you bought hunters in England with Hackney blood in them?—I think I can recollect two in my life that I have bought with Hackney blood in them.

11906. Were they satisfactory?—No, they were not.

11907. We have a good deal of evidence to the effect that the Hackney blood is not only not detrimental to the production of a good hunter, but that a great many good hunters are the result of the first cross of the Hackney blood; have you any opinion about that?—No; I can only judge from the two animals I am speaking of just now that I possessed; they were very smart, nice horses, and jumped very well; as long as hounds ran with a cold scent they could get on very well, but in a burst they failed to keep their place.

11908. You have not had any particular experience except of those two animals of your own?—No, I have not.

11909. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood in Ireland would have a detrimental or beneficial effect upon the production of hunters?—Oh, a most detrimental effect in my opinion.

11910. Do you think the introduction of the Hackney blood would be beneficial in the congested districts and those parts of the country?—Well, I have had no experience of that part of the country, and I could hardly say; I don't like the Hackney.

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11911. Assuming that it would be beneficial there, do you think there would be any danger of the blood gradually permeating through the country and doing damage?—I should say there would be great danger of its filtering far and wide.

11912. We have had a good deal of difference in evidence as to the value of the half-bred sire; I mean by half-bred sire a sire that is not in the Stud Book, but with many crosses of thoroughbred blood—as to whether they are suitable or not for getting hunters and high-class carriage horses out of the half-bred mares; have you got any opinion about that?—Oh, I have a very strong opinion. I should be very sorry to use them to get hunters. My own idea of the hunter is if you want to breed a hunter I think you should have a pure strain of blood on one side, and that remark would apply to the breeding, in my opinion, of cattle or sheep too; but for carriage horses I dare-say a half-bred horse would do; I won't say as well, but that he might do.

11913. Have you formed any opinion as to the class of thoroughbred stallions in Ireland generally, I am not speaking of Meath and that kind of counties, but more of the West, and so on?—I have not seen many during the last few years; I was so much engaged at the last Dublin Horse Show in my ring that I did not see the thoroughbred stallions then, but when I have seen them it has been a source of surprise to me that so good a collection could be got together; I had not thought there were so many good horses in Ireland.

11914. We have had a good deal of evidence to the effect that in the remoter parts of the country the description of the thoroughbred horse is very inferior indeed, which, perhaps, is not strange, if they are not able to get more than a 5*s.* fee?—In the West of Ireland?

11915. Yes, all over the north and south and the poorer parts of the country with the small farmers, and the question would be if anything is to be done to try and improve the horse-breeding in those parts of the country, what kind of a sire would be most suitable?—As I have no knowledge of the mares I should hardly like to express a positive opinion, but I am always in favour of the thoroughbred stallion.

11916. That is to say, if a sound thoroughbred stallion with sufficient bone and substance could be obtained, you would prefer that to anything else?—Certainly.

11917. Even for those parts of the country where the mares are very small and light and weedy?—Yes.

11918. I don't know whether you could give the Commission any information as to breeding for harness purposes?—No, I am afraid I cannot.

11919. And we have had a good deal of divergence of opinion also, assuming there was money to be laid out in the improvement of the industry in Ireland, as to how it could be best applied, how the better class of mares generally could be obtained, whether it should be entirely confined to the question of providing superior stallions, or whether anything could be done to induce farmers to keep their best mares to breed from, or supply them with better mares, or anything of that kind?—It seems to me that the best way to improve the breed of hunters in Ireland would be send over a few more superior stallions if we could get them; unquestionably Ireland is worse off for stallions than England.

11920. Then you would not suggest that anything special should be done in respect of the mares, a scheme of registration, or prizes, or anything of the kind?—No; I am afraid I could offer no suggestion, except, perhaps, that I should always encourage the giving of prizes for four-year-old mares with foal at foot.

11921. Can you give us any opinion as to the ponies?—No, I know nothing of ponies.

11922. Have you any information as to the Royal Dublin Society's scheme in Ireland as far as horses are concerned, its methods, and so on?—As far as I can judge from what I heard it seems to be working uncommonly well.

11923. Lord Londonderry.—I gather from what you told the Chairman that you consider the best hunters you had originally came from Ireland?—Yes.

11924. You attribute the goodness of those animals to the soil, and to the climate to a great extent?—I think to their superior breeding first, and then to the soil and climate which are so well adapted for the raising of young horses. In my experience it seems to me that the Irish horses have always so much more bone than those bred in England, and better quality of bone.

11925. Have you had the horses you have had experience of from any particular district, that you have confined yourself to?—I used to buy nearly all my horses in Cork, Limerick, and Tipperary.

11926. Have you judged at any Shows in Ireland besides the Royal Dublin Society's Show?—Yes, I have judged at Clonmel and Limerick.

11927. You were struck there by the superior class of hunter that you have seen shown there?—Yes; generally all through the shows the young horses have been particularly good.

11928. Comparing the Dublin with the Islington Show, and the local shows in Ireland with those in England, would you say that the hunters shown in Ireland were superior to the class shown in England at similar shows?—Yes, a far superior class; you see a far larger number of superior horses than you see in England.

11929. When you were judging in England, have you seen superior horses to which you have given prizes that you have known to come from Ireland and taken prizes there?—Yes, many.

11930. And those horses by their appearance were by thoroughbred horses?—Certainly; I should think so.

11931. And from a superior class of mare?—Yes.

11932. Such as you see in those hunter breeding centres to which you have alluded—Meath, Kildare, Tipperary, and Waterford?—Yes.

11933. In your experience of judging horses at shows, you would be able to tell—very likely you would notice—probably by shape and action whether there was anything of the Hackney strain in horses shown as hunters?—I think I should detect it, the action is so very different.

11934. Would you give a horse of that sort, however well shaped, a prize as against a horse perhaps not so well shaped, but showing qualities and action which he could only get by a thoroughbred sire?—I should not; certainly not. I should give the preference to the hunting type of horse. To my mind the action of the Hackney is not suited to get over the country.

11935. You have seen of course a good many of those Hackneys. I don't know whether you have seen any of the Congested Districts Board—you know some of those horses?—I have seen them in London and at different places in the country too.

11936. They are to a certain extent very taking in their action when they are walking through the town?—Yes.

11937. Do you think that those animals standing about parts of Ireland, and their appearance being more taking than the true hunter sire, might induce the farmers to send their mares to such a type?—Yes; the action of the Hackney would be sure to fascinate the farmer; he would like to see him run up and down the street in a market town, and he would send his mare to him in preference to a thoroughbred sire.

11938. And that you think would be disastrous to maintaining the present superior breeding of the hunter which now exists?—Certainly, I do; I don't think you can improve the lines on which the principal hunter breeders are going now in Ireland.

11938A. And if those Hackneys were used in certain parts of Ireland, whether they would be an advantage you would draw a hard and fast line to prevent their getting into those parts of Ireland in which you admire the present breed of hunters?—I should like to see that done very much.

11939. You have not seen those parts of Ireland in which it is proposed to produce a better class of animal from those poor mares by Hackney stallions?—No, I have not.

11940. Have you been in South Wales, in Lord Tredegar's part, at all?—Yes, I have been there.

11941. He told us, I think, that one of the best hunters he or his men had, was by a Hackney. Have you seen the produce by his Hackney stallions from the poorer class of animals that he reared in those poorer districts of South Wales?—Yes, I think I have. I have seen ponies got by Hackneys in local shows there.

11942. Did they give you the idea that they would be animals that would fetch a certain price in the open market?—I think they would have been useful for harness purposes.

11943. Then, as far as I gather, your opinion is that if these Hackneys, so far as your experience in Lord Tredegar's district, could be kept perfectly pure and confined to those poor districts they would be of use, but that if they were allowed to get down to those hunter-breeding counties they would ruin the breeding of hunters?—Quite so.

11944. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Talking about stallions, you advocate thoroughbred stallions, but in the event of not being able to get the required number of thoroughbred stallions in Ireland, should you object to a well-bred half-bred stallion?—I think I should on principle.

11945. How would you supply his place?—I think the people who live in the locality ought to meet, and try to get the thoroughbred horses.

11946. What do you think a thoroughbred horse suitable for the purposes can be obtained for now-a-days?—I should think a very suitable horse might be obtained at from £100 to £150. I am speaking of the ordinary run of horses, nothing out of the common. I don't mean a special horse such as "Workington," but horses which have broken down, with no particular character on the turf, but who are yet good-looking, well-shaped horses. I think they might be got at from £100 to £150. But I have had no experience myself in buying lately.

11947. Do you object at all to breeding early from a mare that is going to be used afterwards for other purposes?—No, I see no objection to it. I think very often a mare takes some time to recover from it, and that her appearance is not so good for two or three years perhaps.

11948. But you don't think it would injure her in her growth?—I think not.

11949. Your remarks as to hunters and hunter breeding, do they apply also to riding horses generally throughout Ireland?—I hardly understand your question.

11950. Do the remarks that you have made with regard to the qualities of the hunter apply to horses for general purposes?—Oh, I think so. It seems to me, from my experience of Ireland, that the horses are generally very well bred. Certainly in the South they are a very well bred type.

11951. Lord RATHDONNELL.—From what you have seen of Irish shows where you have judged, do you think that the high class horses in Ireland have deteriorated, or the reverse?—I don't think you see any more good horses than you did eight or ten years ago. I should think the supply keeps pretty much the same. I do not see any great improvement so far as I can judge in the numbers.

11952. As to quality?—I think I see more under-bred horses in the show now than I did fifteen or twenty years ago, but all the best horses are still of the same quality.

11953. About the same in number?—I should think so.

11954. You say you would not have a half-bred sire in Ireland on principle—do you know how the winner of the last Grand Military at Sandown was bred?—I don't know his name.

11955. Do you know he is by a horse called "Mackintosh?"—I have heard the name.

11956. He is a half-bred horse?—We speak of him as a half-bred horse; he is not in the Stud Book.

Mr. WRENCH.—He is practically thoroughbred, but not in the Stud Book.

Witness.—Then, he is probably what they call a cocktail, nearly as thoroughbred as "Eclipse," but never registered.

11957. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think he is a half-bred horse.

Lord LONDONDERRY.—The famous "Mrs. Taaffe" was half-bred.

Witness.—Yes, and "Hotspur," who ran second in the Derby, but I believe they were as thoroughbred as "Eclipse," only they have never been registered.

11958. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Still you would not object to using a horse of that class?—Possibly the dam of this horse might have been a thoroughbred mare, and in that case I should not object to it. My contention is that you must have a pure strain of blood on one side.

11959. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—I conclude you would have the same objection to a Hackney stallion as to a half-bred?—Certainly.

11960. Would you or would you not consider that the Hackney strain was a pure strain of blood?—I should not consider them a pure strain.

11961. Have you ever judged Hackneys at local shows in England?—No, never; I frequently had horses that come before me, got by Hackneys, no doubt.

11962. The leading characteristic of the Hackney horse is action I suppose?—I think so.

11963. Do you think that he contains merit of shape and form besides action?—Very often they are well made horses. I don't think they show much quality.

11964. You said you thought you could detect the Hackney blood in a hunter from the Hackney action, but I suppose it would be quite possible that a Hackney horse might transmit his shape without his action to his progeny?—Oh, I should think so. I should say that three out of four would have the action more or less of the Hackney; but I should not like to speak positively on that point because I have had no experience in breeding them.

11965. You say that Ireland is badly off in the matter of stallions—did you mean in the number or quality of the stallions?—I should say the quantity in the rural districts. I was judging last year in Limerick. There were very nice horses shown, but I don't think there were more than four or five stallions at the show. These were very nice horses, but not in my opinion a sufficient number for the district.

11966. It has been represented to us that a great many stallions in the country districts are unsound from disease, and that it is possible that the disease would be hereditary—would you approve of practically prohibiting such stallions from serving?—Oh, I think I should like to see it done, but of course it would be a very difficult matter to carry out.

11967. I take it that in your opinion there is nothing that a Hackney horse can do that a thoroughbred cannot do better except bending his knee?—Yes. That is so.

11968. You fully recognize the importance of breeding harness horses—how would you propose that those harness horses should be bred in Ireland? I don't think they do breed; as far as I can see from my experience I don't think they do go in for breeding harness horses in Ireland, do they?—I don't see many.

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11969. There are something like 40,000 horses exported from Ireland to England—a very large proportion of those must go to be harness horses?—Yes, I think so. I think those are colts as far as I can judge that are bought as two or three year olds at Cahirmee fair, but a great many of those which are taken over to London for harness purposes would make very useful hunters no doubt.

11970. You have possibly heard of those mares the property of farmers in the poorer parts of Ireland, do you think they would be capable of breeding an animal of any utility by a thoroughbred sire—do you think those very indifferent mares would be capable of producing an animal of any value or utility?—I have had no experience of those, but I am a great believer in the thoroughbred blood. I think it is very possible that a thoroughbred sire might get some very good offspring from those mares, but I have not seen them, so I cannot say.

11971. You think they would be just as likely to produce a useful stock by a thoroughbred sire as any other sire?—I should say so.

11972. Mr. CAREW.—You know that a great want in Ireland is some inducement to the farmer to retain his mares to breed from?—Yes, I have heard that.

11973. What would you recommend as an inducement to them—I think you said to the Chairman that you would establish prizes for four year old mares with foals at foot at the shows?—Yes. I think that would be a step in the right direction.

11974. Would you have prizes for three-year-olds with foals at foot?—I don't think so.

11975. You would not object to breed from two-year-olds?—I don't think so. I will give an instance. I bred from a mare who was only two years old, I sent her to a horse called "Petronel." The result was a colt that won a race yesterday.

11976. That was "Petronel" the winner of the Two Thousand guineas?—Yes. Many of my friends thought the mare was too young to send to the horse, but I did that as an experiment, and it certainly turned out pretty well. That is the only time I put a two-year-old to the horse.

11977. You know that the farmers breed from two-year-olds, and very successfully, in Ireland?—Yes.

11978. And if prizes were given to three-year-old mares with foals at foot, it would be a great inducement?—I think that would be a step in the right direction.

11979. Then your predilection for the Irish hunter is due to the superior breeding?—Yes.

11980. And to the absence of Hackney blood?—Certainly.

11981. And if you were a buyer in Ireland you would object to the introduction of the Hackney blood?—Certainly.

11982. You think that they would taint the hunter breed?—Certainly; they would destroy, in my opinion, the character of the Irish hunter altogether.

11983. You have considerable experience yourself in the shows in England and Ireland of the different qualities of the horses exhibited there?—Yes.

11984. And it is in favour of Ireland?—Certainly.

11985. And if Ireland had the same facilities for getting thoroughbred stock she would still maintain the superiority in the breeding of horses?—I think the horses are now greatly superior in Ireland to what they are in England.

11986. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you breed horses very much?—Not very largely. I have always had three or four mares for the last forty years.

11987. No Hackney mares?—No, never,

11989. If you had to try to improve the very miserable animals in the very poor districts, what class of sire would you be inclined to use?—I lean towards the thoroughbred blood. I should like to try a small thoroughbred sire; I imagine they are of the pony class, the mares, are they not?

11990. They are horses dwarfed by starvation, do you think that a small thoroughbred would produce the most marketable animal?—I cannot say that, because generally speaking I do not know what these ponies are. If they have no action the thoroughbred horse has very often no action either, and the result would be that perhaps the animals would not be so saleable for that reason.

11991. Do you think that action is a saleable commodity for a poor man's horse?—Oh, I think so, for certain purposes; for harness, I have harness in my mind.

11992. Do you think that a thoroughbred horse, no matter how good his action would be, is likely to transmit action as a breed of horses that had it bred in them for generations?—Oh, I think so. I think if the thoroughbred has good action himself he would probably transmit it to his offspring.

11993. As much as the Hackney?—Yes. I do not see why he should not.

11994. Have you any experience of that?—There was "Q.C.," a thoroughbred horse with the finest action I ever saw.

11995. You saw him yesterday?—I did not know that he was at the show. That was a horse with very fine action indeed, and I have understood that he transmits that through his produce, but I have never seen any of them, so that I cannot speak of my own experience.

11996. And would you object more or equally to the cross of the Suffolk Punch on a hunter as the cross of the Hackney?—I don't like the Suffolk Punch.

11997. You dislike him as much for hunting blood as you do the Hackney?—Certainly as much as the Hackney.

11998. And do you dislike the Clydesdale as much?—I dislike the Clydesdale. I should prefer to breed from a Shire or cart horse and put him with a thoroughbred mare than I would from a Hackney.

11999. But I am talking of half-bred mares—would you object to Clydesdale blood in hunters?—I don't like it.

12000. Do you think it would be easier to detect cart blood in hunters than Hackney blood in hunters?—I think it would be much easier to detect Hackney blood than cart blood in the hunter.

12001. Have you known instances of horses with cart blood in them very good hunters?—Very good, indeed.

12002. And sold at a very big price?—And sold at a very big price. I knew one horse sold for five hundred guineas, and I have known several sold at four hundred and three hundred, out of cart mares. But the gentleman who bought them I don't think knew them to be out of cart mares. But I knew, because they were bred in my neighbourhood. There was a horse called "Flash in the Pan," who was a very good hunter getter. The local farmers sent their cart mares to him and he was very successful in getting good horses. There was a horse of my own, called "Umpire," I remember his getting three remarkably good hunters out of a cart mare, one found its way into the stable of a very good judge indeed, it had been bought by a dealer and sold to this gentleman, and the gentleman wrote to me for the pedigree of the mare, and he asked me if she was a thoroughbred, he had such a high opinion of the horse, and when I told him the pedigree I could hardly get him to believe it the horse showed as much quality almost as a thoroughbred horse.

12003. He was sold at a very big price?—Four hundred guineas. He was by "Umpire" out of a cart mare.

12004. Mr. CAREW.—Was "Umpire" thoroughbred?—Yes.

12005. Mr. WRENCH.—You think that the pedigrees given by farmers at Irish fairs might be fairly relied on?—I think so.

12006. And you think it is tolerably easy to detect Hackney blood in an animal?—I do.

12007. If there are those two circumstances what danger is there of the Hackney blood being used by people who do not wish to use it?—Oh, well I think the danger would be if the Hackneys found their way into the South of Ireland. I think they would be very largely used possibly.

12008. Have you ever heard that it is suggested that Hackney stallions should be sent into the hunter-breeding districts?—I have never heard it—no.

12009. My point was that if you can detect the Hackney blood, and also if you can ascertain the pedigrees, what danger is there of animals with Hackney blood in them being used as hunter brood mares?—I suppose the farmers would use them.

12010. Yes; but then if you are told that there is a Hackney cross in a hunter, if you don't like the Hackney cross you would not buy the animal?—Perhaps after the second cross it would not be so easy to detect it.

12011. Would you object to the second cross?—Oh, certainly.

12012. The cross of the Yorkshire Hackney if he had thoroughbred blood in him?—I should not have called the Hackney a thoroughbred myself, but I have no experience of them.

12013. Have you any preference for the Norfolk or Yorkshire Hackneys?—I have not studied the breed very much. I have seen them, but have never had anything to do with them.

12014. Do you think that the Hunter Improvement Society has done good in England?—Oh, I think so.

12015. Would you like to see a similar Society started in Ireland?—I rather think I must qualify that opinion by saying I have not followed the proceedings of the Hunter Improvement Society very much lately, but I understand that they rather sanction the use of half-bred sires. I object to that very much indeed, to half-bred sires with a certain number of strains of thoroughbred blood in them.

12016. Do you object to half-bred sires, limiting them as they limit them?—I do.

12017. You would not have that blood?—I would never use them at all unless for thoroughbred mares. My contention is that you must have the pure blood on one side to be successful.

12018. Do you know as a matter of fact that in Ireland there are a very large number of cart horses—half-bred cart horse stallions standing even in the best hunter-breeding districts?—No; I do not. In my visits to the South of Ireland I never see them. Probably I should not be in the way of seeing them perhaps. I never recollect to have seen many cart horses in Ireland.

12019. Has it ever been brought to your attention that many of the best hunters in the Dublin Show are by half-bred horses?—No.

12020. Do you believe the pedigrees given in the Dublin Show Catalogue as well as the pedigrees given by the farmers at fairs?—I do. I believe they are generally correct.

12021. Do you think it is a curious fact that there are a number of horses with pedigrees, and there is a note attached that the breeders are unknown?—No doubt a great many mistakes are made, but generally I believe the pedigrees are correct.

12022. Substantally correct?—I think so.

12023. And therefore if an attempt was made to start a Hunter Improvement Society in Ireland it would not be difficult to obtain material?—I think not.

12024. Do I understand you to say that the thoroughbred horse is practically the only sire you would encourage in Ireland by public money?—With a view to breeding hunters.

12025. Would you turn the whole country into hunter breeders?—Oh, I incline to the hunter more than to any other class of horse.

12026. Would you try and encourage all the horse breeders in Ireland to breed hunters, or do you think there is a large opening for breeding harness horses?—There is room for all. I don't see why farmers should not breed harness horses if they like. I think they would find hunters most profitable.

12027. Do you think that the hunter is as profitable to the poor small farmer who cannot make them but merely can sell them easily?—I think so; he would probably sell them as colts, yearlings, or two-year-olds.

12028. Do you think it is as profitable as selling harness horses with action?—I think so. I think a hunter of good quality, two or three years old, would fetch much more money than a harness horse got by a Hackney, that is my opinion.

12029. Do you know the North of Ireland at all?—No, I don't.

12030. You don't know what class of horses they breed there?—No.

12031. Then you are not prepared to say that there is no opening for breeding harness horses in Ireland as well as for breeding hunters?—No.

12032. Do you consider Ireland the best country in the world for breeding horses of every kind?—I think it is the best I know of.

12033. It has been suggested to us that all stallion owners should be obliged to take out a licence, and that the licences would only be granted to sound stallions, would you approve of such a recommendation?—Oh, I think I should, certainly.

12034. Do you think with regard to mares that it is feasible to give any sufficiently large prizes to induce the farmers to keep their best mares, and not sell them if they get a good offer?—I think so. As I was saying before, I should encourage the two or three year old classes by giving good prizes.

12035. What do you call good prizes—I mean the amount?—I hardly know; I think prizes of £30 and that sort of thing.

12036. CHAIRMAN.—You attach great importance, absolute importance, to the existence of a pure strain on one side or the other in breeding horses, cattle, and so on?—Certainly.

12037. As regards Hackneys, do you consider that the pure strain is established by the horse being in the Hackney Stud Book?—I should not have said so myself.

12038. How would you define as regards Hackneys and Clevelands and a variety of horses—what do you understand by a pure strain in anything except a thoroughbred?—I should think there were none of them pure, that is my view.

12039. And practically either the dam or sire should be a thoroughbred?—Yes.

12040. As to the pedigrees, some apprehension has been expressed before us in evidence that the cross of these Western ponies, the animals that Mr. Wrench described as half starved animals, and the Hackney sire would be sold in the parts of the country more or less devoted to hunters, and that they were not suitable for breeding hunters. You said that you think that the pedigrees given to you by the farmers and others from whom you bought might be generally relied upon, but that would not affect this particular case; it would be a question whether the farmer buying a mare to breed from would be sure of its pedigree. Do you think that in the case of, say these horses coming from Connaught and the Western districts into the open market, do you suppose the farmer buying a mare to breed from would make any particular inquiry as to pedigree, or would pick up the animal he thought best suited to him?—I should say that he would make inquiries, but I have not sufficient knowledge of your countrymen to say that, but I should think he would; they always seem to take an interest in the pedigree, and nearly always when I have been buying horses I invariably ask for the pedigree, and I generally find that they give me a pedigree that I can trace whenever I try to do it, and they are correct generally speaking.

12041. You don't disapprove of breeding from two-year-olds yourself?—No, I think not. As I was saying, I only bred once from a two-year-old mare.

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12042. The result would depend a good deal upon how the mare was treated?—Yes, this mare had been in training and well done all her life.

12043. And you told us that you thought that, as far as the breeding of hunters was concerned, the present lines on which the breeders were acting in Ireland were satisfactory, what do you mean by the present lines?—I think that as to the present lines that they use in the South of Ireland they breed from well-bred mares and from thoroughbred horses. I don't think they could proceed on better lines than those.

12044. And you think that a certain number of sound and suitable thoroughbred stallions with, we will say, not speed enough for racing, or perhaps broken down from some comparatively immaterial cause, can be had for about £150?—I should think so.

12045. Do you know what price the Government paid on an average for their Hackney stallions?—I don't know.

12046. Assuming it to have been on an average £200, you think *a fortiori* suitable half-bred stallions could be obtained at the same price?—I should say so, but I am taking your figure.

12047. Speaking very generally—I do not know whether you could express any opinion about it—would you say that the breeding of hunters and high class carriage horses, which are bred in some numbers in Ireland, is probably the most profitable branch of the industry of horse breeding in the country?—I should think certainly it is.

12048. And would you think it dangerous to encourage the production of harness horses by say the introduction of Hackney stallions—do you think that would be likely to be followed by any consequences which would deteriorate the hunters?—I think it would be most dangerous to the interests of the farmers—most dangerous.

12049. Mr. WRENCH.—You referred to two horses that you recollected with Hackney blood—do you remember what Hackney stallion they were by?—Oh, no; it was years ago; I don't remember what they were by.

12050. Or whether they were bred in Yorkshire or Norfolk?—I don't remember; I know they were by Hackney horses.

12051. But you don't know any particulars?—No.

12052. And in the fairs that you attended in Ireland, do you think the preponderance was of good or bad horses?—Oh, largely of bad horses. I should think a great many bad ones of course. In a fair like Cahermee you see a great many.

12053. Yes, but that is a picked fair?—Yes, there are two or three thousand horses there. There must be however a very large number of bad ones.

12054. Do you think that it is the duty of any public body to try and improve the best class or try to help the poor people?—I should try to improve the best class of horses. I should try to improve both. I think it is the duty of every landlord to do what he can to try to improve the breed generally.

12055. You think the poor farmers would have an equal claim at any rate with the big farmers to be improved?—Certainly

12056. Do you know that in Ireland the very poor farmers form a large preponderance of the population?—I have no doubt that they do; yes.

12057. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know that prizes are given by the Hunters Improvement Society for hunter sires, half-bred sires—do you know the conditions?—I think my friend who is going to be examined can probably tell you, Mr. Legard. I think they must have four crosses of the thoroughbred blood, but I was very sorry such a rule was ever allowed to pass.

12058. You don't approve of it?—I don't approve of it at all.

12059. I only wanted to get from you whether you disapprove of it, subject to those rules?—Yes, I disapprove of it.

12060. Lord RATHDONNELL. — In your travels through Ireland, have you ever privately bought hunters from small farmers, breeders?—Oh, frequently.

12061. You think the small farmer is a pretty sharp man as a rule about breeding?—I think so. I used to buy cub hunters, and I found I could buy them from small farmers better than anyone, generally small horses.

12062. A good class?—A very good class.

12063. Mr. WRENCH.—What do you call a small farmer?—I could not say.

12064. You did not take the acreage of the farm?—They were not what you would call strong farmers.

The Rev Cecil Legard.

The Rev. CECIL LEGARD examined.

12065. CHAIRMAN.—You live at Cottesbrooke Rectory, Northampton?—Yes.

12066. You have had a large experience in horses, and have acted as a judge at shows for many years?—I daresay twenty-five years.

12067. Have you judged in Ireland at all?—Yes; on three or four occasions in Dublin and once in Limerick; not more than that.

12068. Then your only comparative knowledge would be as regards the Dublin show?—Yes.

12069. Have you formed any opinion as to the utility of the Royal Dublin Society's scheme, and the benefits it has produced, if any?—I am afraid I do not quite understand it: I have not been told what it was.

12070. When did you judge first at the Dublin show—do you remember the date?—Probably it might be ten years ago, perhaps.

12071. And when last?—Perhaps about three years ago.

12072. Did you attend the show last year?—No.

12073. You have not been there for the last three years?—Not since I judged about three years ago.

12074. What opinion did you form during those seven or eight years as to the improvement or deterioration of the horses shown, and so on?—Well, there were a great number that I think ought not to have been shown at all, and were not shown with any idea of getting prizes. They were sent there with more of the idea of getting customers.

12075. The numbers were greater in the last years than in former years?—I am afraid I cannot tell you that. I remember the class I judged; there were 253 horses in one class.

12076. What class was that?—I think the class 12 st. to 13 st. 7 lb.

12077. Mr. WRENCH.—Light-weight hunters?—Yes, as well as I can remember.

12078. CHAIRMAN.—Would you approve of the registration of half-bred sires under the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—Well, I should.

12079. How would you define them—in the same manner as they are defined by the Hunters' Improvement Society?—I should give, I believe, rather more latitude than they are inclined to give. According to their conditions they are practically thoroughbred. They are race-horses with a cock-tail stain only according to the Hunters' Improvement Society.

12080. And you think that a thoroughbred sire, sound and otherwise suitable, is a suitable stallion to use in Ireland for getting hunters?—Yes, undoubtedly, for hunters.

12081. I am not speaking at all, of course, about thoroughbred stock. Do you know Ireland pretty well in the way of horse-breeding?—No, I don't.

12082. You don't know the South at all?—No, with the exception of being in Limerick, and lately in Kildare, I really know nothing.

12083. You only judged once at Limerick?—No. That was probably about five or six years ago.

12084. What opinion did you form as to the quality of the animals shown in the various classes?—Full of quality—very good.

12085. I mean quality in the more general sense?—Yes, there was not so inferior a class, I should say, as what there was in the Dublin Show.

12086. Were there a large number of stallions exhibited?—Oh, I don't think there were any stallions.

12087. Have you bought many horses yourself in Ireland?—In England I have bought horses from Ireland—one or two from Capt. Steed, but, as a rule, I have not bought horses in Ireland.

12088. We have had in evidence before us that the breed of hunters and high class carriage horses, and so on, are deteriorating in Ireland, and that a good deal owing to the fact that so many of the best mares are sold out of the country and go abroad. Have you any opinion whether that is the case?—I quite agree with that. I think that is at the root of it.

12089. If that be so, can you suggest any means by which the best stock could be retained in the country?—I am afraid hardly. The only chance would be to give very good prizes to young mares—two, three, and four-year-old mares. I doubt that that would stop the foreigners.

12090. It would put the prices up?—Yes. If a mare won these prizes that would enhance her value and the foreigner would give an extra price in proportion. I don't think anything would stop them buying the best mares. They buy with public money. My experience is confined to the East Riding of Yorkshire. I know what the mischief has been there from foreigners, from what I recollect and from what I have heard from older men who are now dead.

12091. Do you think that the system of the registration of mares is practicable?—Oh, yes.

12092. Do you think it would be useful?—It would be useful, and, I should say, would enhance their value.

12093. In both cases I gather from you the enhancement in the value of the animal would not be sufficient to keep it in the country—the foreigners would probably give more for it?—I think so.

12094. It would only benefit the farmer?—Yes.

12095. It would not benefit the industry in the country?—No; nor would it benefit the breeder in the long run as he would have to sell his good mare.

12096. Do you think that the Irish hunter or high class carriage horse commands a better price in the market from the fact that he is an Irish horse?—Well, I think, perhaps, as a hunter he does, because I think people buy hunters so much from being better performers over the country. They are better made than the English hunter.

12097. Do you think the greater purity, or supposed greater purity of blood in Ireland would have anything to do with the predilection of people for Irish hunters?—No, I think not. I think it is from their performance they would give more money, not from their being better bred.

12098. Have you a knowledge of the Hackney sire as a sire—I don't mean in Ireland, but in England?—Yes, I have seen a good deal of them in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

12099. Do you think they are suitable sires to get hunters?—Oh, no; not to get hunters. I have known one horse which was by a Hackney—a very good horse—but that is the only one I can remember.

12100. That would be an exception?—Quite an exception.

12101. We have had it in evidence that for a certain class of carriage horse the thoroughbred sire is the best, that a certain number by thoroughbred horses are bought in Ireland, and that they are superior to anything produced by the Hackney sire. Do you think that that is the case?—Yes. I should say that for a high class carriage horse, but not for the ordinary run—the smaller, what many people drive now in the lower carriages, the 15.1 hands or 15.2 horse; but certainly to be the sire of the bigger, finer, dark bay or brown horse, the thoroughbred would be the sire for them.

12102. But for a smaller class of harness horses you think the Hackney would be suitable?—Quite so.

12103. Hackneys are very largely bred in Yorkshire, are they not?—Yes, in the East Riding.

12104. Much more so now than formerly?—Yes.

12105. What effect has it had on the industry of breeding horses in the East Riding—has it made it more profitable to the farmer?—Yes; it has brought thousands and thousands of pounds to the East Riding of Yorkshire.

12106. Used more hunters be bred there formerly than now?—Very many more.

12107. Is that owing to the introduction of the Hackney, that decrease?—No. I should say not. I should say that it is not that the Hackney has ousted the hunter breeders. I should say that it is the fact that the old farmers and horse-loving classes, who have always for generations bred hunters, have sold and sold all their good mares, till at last they could not breed anything worth buying, and then those men have taken to breeding the Hackney.

12108. And Hackneys proved more profitable?—Well, it has proved profitable.

12109. Your opinion is that they have ceased to be able to produce the hunter?—Yes; through having been tempted to sell their best mares.

12110. Do you know Ireland well enough and the condition of the horse breeding there to give us any general opinion as to how, in your opinion, the industry of horse breeding could be encouraged, assuming that State money was devoted to that purpose?—I do not know enough of the districts. But if there are districts where they do not profess to breed hunters, where there are small, little mean mares, I would not say ponies, but pretty well-bred little things, there I should say that they would do much better to have Hackney stallions in that district than thoroughbred horses, simply with the idea of breeding saleable animals for harness. They would breed almost big enough for cavalry remounts and that class of horse.

12111. Do you think the horse got by a Hackney is a suitable cavalry remount?—I don't, except when out of these little, undersized, very well-bred mares.

12112. Would you anticipate any danger to the breeding of hunters in those parts of the country which are devoted to breeding hunters, from the Hackney blood gradually filtering into it?—I should be rather afraid that it might in the course of time.

12113. You think it would be difficult to keep the two districts separately distinct?—I should be a little bit afraid of it.

12114. Lord LONDONDERRY.—You have judged a good deal at English shows as well as at shows in Ireland?—More in England.

12115. Have you the same admiration for the Irish hunter as Lord Coventry has—would you put them above the English hunter?—Not above the best English hunters.

12116. You think you have seen first rate horses from both?—Yes.

12117. The horses you were chiefly struck with by their quality were at Limerick—more by them than what you saw at Dublin in proportion to their numbers?—Yes. In Dublin probably more were sent, not with the idea of winning prizes, but to sell, whereas in Limerick those that were sent were exhibited chiefly with the idea of getting prizes.

12118. Do you think the horses which were non-prize winners in Dublin would fetch prices that would be remunerative to the people who bred them?—Yes.

12119. I think you told the Chairman that you thought one of the reasons of the deterioration in the breed of hunters was the fact that all the best mares went out of Ireland?—Yes.

12120. And if prizes of a substantial character were given they would enhance the value of those mares so that they would fetch bigger prices?—Yes.

12121. These mares that would fetch these high prices must be very well bred?—Yes.

12122. Supposing that they had a foal, and that foal instead of being by a thoroughbred horse had

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been by a Hackney and forced his way into these districts, supposing that had been a mare, do you think she would be as valuable as a mare by a thoroughbred horse?—No.

12123. Therefore the value of those mares if crossed with a Hackney would decrease?—The produce would not be so valuable as those by a thoroughbred horse.

12124. Supposing one of those well-bred mares which has had a filly foal, to go on breeding with a Hackney, would you consider that she would be capable by that Hackney cross of breeding a good hunter again in the future?—Oh, she might if put back to the thoroughbred horse again, but I think if the hounds were running hard you would find out the soft places.

12125. You would rather not have the Hackney cross?—Not for a hunter.

12126. Was I right in gathering that you thought that the old-fashioned breed of hunters had very much died out in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and their place had been taken by the Hackneys?—Yes.

12127. Do you think that was due to the Hackney appearing more attractive?—No, I think not. I think it was simply because the Yorkshire farmers are naturally lovers of horses, and they took to the breeding of Hackneys because all the old hunting blood had gone; it is not that they prefer a Hackney.

12128. Just where the North Riding adjoins the East Riding above Malton they breed a certain number of hunters still?—Yes.

12129. Are there Hackney horses about there as well?—I should say not. I am not living in Yorkshire now, but I should say they are breeding from Hackneys in that part along the southern boundary of the North Riding.

12130. I mean where the North Riding and the East Riding adjoin, you think there is a hard and fast line that the Hackneys are kept in the East Riding, and they breed more hunters in the North Riding?—I think so.

12131. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think that there is as good a sale now for half-bred Hackneys as there was a few years ago,?—I really cannot tell you that.

12132. Do you think that the age for Hackneys that existed a few years ago is as great as it was?—I think the demand for them does keep on increasing.

12133. That is for the high class Hackney?—For carriage horses, for small carriage horses.

12134. But yet from what you know of the East Riding of Yorkshire you believe that a great many of these old farmers, if they had the opportunity and had the means, would be glad to get back to their old style of breeding hunters and high class carriage horses?—I think so; I think they would.

12135. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You said that the Yorkshire farmers lost their sound and good mares by selling them to foreigners or dealers?—Chiefly foreigners.

12136. That of course after a time cleared the country of the sound hunting mares?—Yes.

12137. It has been given in evidence before us that something of the same sort is going on in Ireland—have you heard that?—I have heard it; yes.

12138. That the sound ones are taken away and the unsound ones left?—All the best; all that they will buy.

12139. I think you stated, just now, that you thought nothing would stop the foreign dealer from taking away the sound fillies?—I don't think that anything will stop him.

12140. You have got no idea of how to stop them?—No; except by preventing the exportation of mares, which I should like to see done.

12141. Do you think if the fillies were to be in foal at two, three, and four years old, that that would stop the dealer buying them?—Well, very possibly, it might. Very often they would buy a mare that was not in foal, when they would not buy a mare in foal.

12142. If they were in foal, or had foals at foot, they would be less likely to buy them?—It had not occurred to me, but I think that would be so.

12143. Therefore, if any scheme could be devised whereby you could induce the farmers to put their mares in foal at two or three years old, it might prevent the dealers taking the sound ones?—I think it might. I do not know that I should quite advocate the breeding from two-year-olds, for the reason that it all depends upon whether the animal is thoroughly well kept. If a filly is covered at two-year-old, and then turned into a poor pasture, then, I think, it might injure her for ever. I don't think I should advocate putting them to a horse at two years old.

12144. It was more as to the question of trying to keep them in the country that I was speaking of two-year-olds. I think you live in Northamptonshire now?—Yes.

12145. Do you think a hunter, with Hackney blood in his veins, would be likely to cross Northamptonshire in style with hounds running fast?—Not after the first twenty minutes, I should say certainly not.

12146. Mr. WRENCH.—Would you be in favour of starting a Hunters' Improvement Society in Ireland?—I believe it has been a great incentive to breeding in England. I hardly know enough about the Irish to say.

12147. Do you think that better hunters are being bred in England since the inception of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—I think more are bred in districts where hardly any were bred before.

12148. You think it has given an impetus to breeding hunters?—I do, and that it has given an impetus to breeding hunters in England.

12149. And, good as the Irish horses are now, might they not be made still better if a society were started there?—I am afraid I cannot tell you; I have little or no experience in Ireland.

12150. Do you think it would send up the prices of hunters to foreign buyers if they could obtain accurate pedigrees?—I think it would, if they could depend upon these pedigrees.

12151. And do you think if Irish hunter sires, such as you appear to be in favour of, could be produced, that there would be a foreign demand for them to get cavalry horses?—I think they, very likely, might produce good stock out of the small mares, the mares which are not good enough in themselves to breed hunters. I think, very likely, that those stallions, not thoroughbred, but 15 stone horses, I think their produce would command better prices from foreign buyers.

12152. Do you think that foreign buyers would be keen to buy stallions of the weight-carrying hunter type for improving their cavalry?—I cannot say; they might not be authorized to buy anything that was not thoroughbred.

12153. You have not experience of the foreign breeding studs?—No.

12184. Do you think it would be possible to produce a class of weight-carrying hunter sires without establishing a stud book?—It would naturally follow that you would have a stud book. Stud books have been started within quite the last few years. Of all these Clydesdale and Hackneys, and various breeds, there were no stud books, I imagine, a few years ago of these.

12155. And do you think the establishment of these stud books has set up the value of the breed?—I think it would, among foreigners.

12156. You think the starting of stud books among Clydesdales, Hackneys, and Shires, has set up the value of these various breeds?—I do think so; certainly.

12157. Therefore, there would be a good chance of the value of Irish hunters as a breed being sent up if a stud book was established?—Yes, I do think that.

12158. Do you object to the cart horse cross in hunters?—Oh! yes.

12159. As much as you do to the Hackneys or a Suffolk Punch?—I should not like it.

12160. You object to that equally with Hackneys?—Oh! more so.

CHAIRMAN.—Object to which?

12161. Mr. WRENCH.—The Suffolk Punch. And you object to the Clydesdale, more or less?—Well, I should object to them equally with a Suffolk Punch.

12162. You would object to both more than you would to a Hackney?—Certainly, yes.

12163. Then if Ireland has attained its present pre-eminence in hunter-breeding with a large number of these animals in the country, what do you think is the danger of having the Hackney there—if the hunter men have been able to keep clear of these other breeds, what is the danger of the Hackney?—I object to the Hackney also, but not to the same extent that I should to the Suffolk or Clydesdale.

12164. You think he is less objectionable?—He is less objectionable. I would not say but what occasionally you might find an animal that is worth more money which is by a cart horse, simply because it might be bought by a very heavy man who would want a 16-stone horse. He might find occasionally a good horse by a cart horse out of a well-bred mare—a nearly 16-stone horse; whereas the same mare put to a Hackney would probably breed a 12 or 13-stone horse, which would not command anything like the same price as that by the Shire horse.

12165. Have you been to any of the Hackney studs in the East Riding?—Yes, I am a native of the county. I have been among them all my life.

12166. Do you know that a great many of these horses have a large amount of thoroughbred blood in their pedigrees?—No; not a large amount. The "Denmark" strain, I think, went back to an old mare that John Scott trained, a mare by "Gladiator." I am not aware that the others do.

12167. You have not gone into their pedigrees?—No; I have simply hearsay that this particular breed of horses went back to the old chestnut mare that John Scott trained.

12168. Do you say that the East Riding is the best district for breeding Hackneys—I mean that the best Hackneys are bred in the East Riding?—Yes; I should say with more quality and better backs and middles than what I see come from other districts.

12169. Then if all the horses that have been brought over to Ireland to serve in those poor districts came from the East Riding they came from the right spot?—I like the East Riding Hackneys better than those from other places—Suffolk or Norfolk.

12170. You think there is a distinction between the Yorkshire horse and the Norfolk Hackneys?—I do; they have better animals in Yorkshire. Yorkshire horses have better ribs and backs and middles, and more quality than the Norfolk horses.

12171. Do you think it would pay supposing the Yorkshire farmers could go back to breeding hunters—as you think they would like to do—that it would pay them as well as does the breeding of Hackneys?—They can't go back; the mares have gone irretrievably.

12172. Would it pay them as well?—Oh, yes; even not speaking of more than 25 or 30 years ago, hunter four-year olds commanded £200 a piece.

12173. They get much better prices for two-year-olds and three-year old Hackneys than that now in the East Riding?—For a stallion, perhaps, they do. I know there has been an enormous amount of money brought into the Riding from breeding Hackneys.

12174. Could you find a shrewder lot of people than the farmers in the East Riding? Have you ever come across a shrewder people? Would you not call them a very capable and intelligent people?—Certainly; most capable and most intelligent.

12175. Then if they have taken up a particular line of breeding they have done so for some good reason?—Because they like horse breeding and their hunters are gone. They have taken it up on that account.

12176. Do you think a thoroughbred horse would get stock with as good action as a Hackney stallion?—Do you mean action for harness.

12177. I am talking now of the second-class harness horses, the smaller harness horses?—I think the Hackney would get stock with more action.

12178. He would be more certain to get action?—Certainly, unquestionably.

12178A. You say you don't know anything as to how the cavalry and artillery horses are bred in some of the foreign countries now?—No.

12179. Do you think that any of these dealers if he saw a fine horse that suited him would stop buying if he heard his dam was by a Hackney?—As a stallion do you mean.

12180. Simply as a harness horse?—No, it would not stop the dealers buying them for harness purposes.

12181. Your only fear is that it might creep into the hunters and not be detected?—It might or might not be detected. The dealer might detect it when he bought it, but when the purchaser bought from the dealer he might not detect it.

12182. You agree that registration in Ireland or in any country would be desirable?—Yes, certainly.

12183. If registration were adopted what danger would there be of hunter breeders using blood that didn't suit them?—What do you mean by using blood that didn't suit them?

12184. If hunter breeders object to using any animals of Hackney blood and if registration were adopted so that you could see what blood was in each animal?—There would not be the danger because they would know how the animals were bred.

12185. Then you think that registration might meet any danger of that kind?—I do.

12186. CHAIRMAN.—That is registration of mares?—I suppose you mean registering all their produce it might be a colt one year and a filly the next.

12187. Would you not have to register all the mares, horses, and produce of all the horses in the country?—I think you would have to do that; the same as in the Stud Book, I think you would not eliminate the colts.

12188. Do you think that would be practicable?—I think so.

12189. What authority would you suggest to undertake the registration of all the horses in the country?—With regard to here in England it is done simply voluntarily, and prizes are offered by the Hunters' Improvement Society for the produce of registered mares.

12190. I merely mention this as an assumption—assuming that the foreign buyers of remounts would prefer to buy an animal that had no Hackney blood in it; for instance, it would not be probable, would it, that the owners would be voluntarily registering them. Would it not have to be compulsory?—It would be better to be compulsory, no doubt, but I think you would find in most of the cases they would do it voluntarily and be glad to do it. I should not charge them any fee for doing it. In England I think they do charge a fee of 5s. or so, but it might be well done without I should say. I would give every inducement to the breeders and small farmers to register their mares.

12191. But in England this is a purely private matter, and they voluntarily register in certain societies. If you had a system of registration adopted universally all over the country it would have, would it not, to be undertaken by the State?—It would be better to be done so.

12192. Would it not be the only possible way in which you could ascertain that it was done?—Well, it might be done by the local agricultural societies in the various counties.

12193. Provided the State gave them sufficient powers to enforce it?—Yes.

12194. You don't know the West of Ireland personally—you don't know the congested districts at all?—I don't

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12195. I am going to ask you a vague question. Have you such a general idea of the climatic conditions and the conditions of soil and the class of farmers that inhabit the country and so on, as to be able to say that there is any corresponding district in Great Britain where, by the introduction of Hackney stallions, a profitable class of carriage horses has been produced?—I am afraid I have not very much opinion, in fact I am no believer as to the suitability of soil for breeding horses.

12196. I am exceedingly anxious if possible to ascertain the kind of price that these small carriage horses—these rather inferior carriage horses got by Hackneys—would fetch to the breeder, and where they all go to, where they are used, and so on. I don't know whether you could give any opinion. We have had a good deal of evidence before us that the introduction of Hackneys into the congested districts might result in producing a saleable class of horses, but I never yet met anybody to say exactly why, and what the price would be?—Well, there is a great demand for them now. You see twenty carriage horses driving through the streets of London to every one you did perhaps thirty years ago, and that is the very class of horse that goes in these carriages. The carriages are also lower and lighter and smaller than they used to be. They drive these little 15 hands, 15.1, and 15.2 animals, bays and chestnuts with white legs, while formerly people only drove big carriages and good horses, not Hackneys at all.

12197. Have you any kind of idea what this animal is worth to the breeder?—All would depend upon the age at which he sold it.

12198. What age are they generally sold at?—I think the dealers buy them through their agents in the districts. I cannot really tell you that. I should think they buy them probably at from £30 or £40 and upwards, get them into condition and sell them as pairs and get whatever they like for them.

12199. Buying them as three-year-olds?—I should think so, probably.

12200. How are they kept?—They would be well kept in Yorkshire.

12201. You don't know the congested districts well enough to say whether you think the mares there with Hackney sires could produce that kind of foal—whether they could be sufficiently well kept to fetch anything like that price. You could not give an opinion about that?—I am afraid not. I believe the prizes at the local shows induce them to keep their youngsters much better.

12202. You have no personal knowledge of that part of the country?—No.

12203. Where are most of these light carriage horses bred—largely in Yorkshire?—I should think so—in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

12204. Do you know any part of England or Scotland where they are bred by very small farmers?—No; my experience is simply confined to that place.

12205. Do you think they could be profitably produced in the Highlands of Scotland?—They are good constitutioned animals.

12206. They can stand the climate?—Certainly; they are good constitutioned sound animals.

12207. Are they used in Yorkshire for farm purposes?—Oh, no, not for working on the land; they might drive them a little, they are not heavy enough for that.

12208. Lord RATHDONNELL.—In answer to Mr. Wrench you said in your opinion the East Riding of Yorkshire is about the best district to get Hackney horses from?—Yes.

12209. Now, why?—I think they are a better stamp than what I have seen of the Norfolk and Suffolk horses. They have more quality. They are better animals; they have better backs and ribs and middles.

12210. Are you talking now of pure-bred Hackneys?—Yes, the pure-bred Hackneys.

12211. Do you think because a horse comes from such a district it necessarily makes a horse a good one?—No; I don't mean the mere fact that you can breed a better horse in one district than in another—Is that what you mean?

12212. No, I mean this—because a horse comes from a certain district, does that necessarily make the horse a good one?—If he comes out of good stock he is bound to be a better one than one who came from a district where the stock was inferior.

12213. Regardless of conformation or anything else?—Well, if there is a good breed of horses in one country, we will say in the East Riding of Yorkshire, you will be safer in sending for a stallion from there, in my opinion, than you would if you sent for a stallion from Norfolk.

12214. They are all in the same stud book, are they not?—I don't know the Hackney Stud Book at all.

12215. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—With regard to the other breeds of horses that there are about in Yorkshire, the Cleveland and the Yorkshire coach horse, have you any experience with regard to these two breeds?—Very little.

12216. Would they be in your opinion suitable or unsuitable to be crossed for large harness horses or hunters?—Much more suitable to cross than with the large harness mares; you would be disappointed if you crossed them with hunting mares with the idea of getting hunters.

12217. But for the large harness horses—carriage horses?—Oh, yes; they would be most suitable.

12218. Which do you prefer, the Cleveland or the coachhorse for breeding the kind of horses you see driven in London?—I think the Bay Cleveland; they have a little more elegance, I think, than what is called the coach horse; but I think there is very little difference in them really. The Cleveland is longer, and has his tail set on higher; he is a brighter bay than the coach horse; although the coach horse, I think, has the best back and ribs.

12219. You would not like him introduced as a cross into hunter breeding to get weight and size?—No; I should not like him introduced. I think you would get more valuable animals from them than you would with a Hackney cross as a hunter; but I don't advocate it at all.

12220. To get weight and size as hunters you would perhaps prefer them to Hackneys?—Oh, yes; I would prefer them; for where there has been one horse known by a Hackney or by a thoroughbred horse out of a Hackney mare, there are numerous instances of very good hunters by thoroughbred horses out of Cleveland mares.

12221. The headquarters of both the Cleveland and the coach horse are—one in the extreme North Riding of Yorkshire, and the other chiefly in the East Riding?—Yes; there are a few places in the East Riding where they breed fine big carriage horses, but it is chiefly, I think, confined to the North Riding, and further north still.

12222. Mr. CAREW.—You would not recommend the introduction of Hackney blood into a district where the farmers would be obliged to use the produce for farm purposes?—Well, a good deal depends upon what the land is like that they would have to work. They would not do for ploughing in England, they are not heavy enough, but I could not say on Irish farms.

12223. You don't think they would be useful for ploughing?—Not in England.

12224. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know that the horses that do most of the work on the small farms in Ireland now are very small. Has that ever come under your notice? You don't know that?—I don't know that.

12225. When you talk of the East Riding being a good district or not, of course a district does not make any difference in the horse, but would you think that a Hackney that had a large preponderance

of "Denmark" and "Fireaway" blood in him had a certain value from his blood?—Certainly I do.

12226. That a horse with that strain of blood would be the right strain?—I do.

12227. Do you think Ireland is one of the best countries for breeding horses?—It always had that reputation, and I have no doubt that it is so.

12228. And do you think, therefore, that horse breeding in Ireland is a sufficiently important industry to warrant a system of State registration being started?—Oh, certainly. In England now, people who buy horses for hunting rely almost entirely upon Ireland for their supply.

12229. And, therefore, you think any steps in that direction would be warranted by the importance of it?—Most decidedly.

12230. CHAIRMAN.—There are many farmers in Yorkshire breeding these light carriage horses by Hackneys who cannot always be successful—what becomes of the misfits? What are they used for? How are they worked?—They are still driven. They still come down to draught purposes of a sort—light conveyances, I imagine—butchers' carts, and things of that sort.

12231. Mr. WRENCH.—Don't misfits of thoroughbreds sell very badly, too?—Oh, yes.

12232. When you get a misfit it does not matter what the breed is?—No; except that a misfit of a Hackney would be really more serviceable for light carts and other things, whereas a thoroughbred misfit would be worthless.

12233. CHAIRMAN.—We have been told in evidence in Ireland that in breeding hunters and high-class carriage horses, the misfits are very serviceable as remounts. That is why I asked you particularly as to what would be the value of the misfits of this light kind of carriage horse?—Well, if they were big enough, they might do for remounts; if not, they would have to go for small harness purposes.

12234. You don't know whether the Hackney blood is considered suitable for remounts?—I don't know as a fact.

12235. I don't mean as a matter of opinion, but as a matter of fact?—I can't speak as a matter of fact. No.

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12236. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the neighbourhood of Hull?—Yes.

12237. Are you engaged in breeding horses?—I am.

12238. What kind do you breed?—Almost all classes. I have several pure bred Hackney mares, two or three thoroughbreds, and then I have some half-bred mares that I breed from.

12239. Half-bred mares?—Of all classes.

12240. You keep a stallion or stallions of your own?—I always keep three, a Hackney, a Shire, and a thoroughbred.

12241. And of your own mares, what mares do you put to the thoroughbred, and what to the Hackney?—I only breed pure-bred Hackneys from the Hackney, but all kinds of mares I put to the thoroughbred. The best Hackneys, those that are in the Hackney book—they are very expensive, their fees being £15, £20, and £10, and nothing less than £5; the blood horses cover at less money, 30s. and £2.

12242. You breed only pure-bred Hackneys?—Pure-bred Hackneys. I may have occasionally, just for a trial, put a Hackney horse on a young cross-bred mare just to see what they will breed.

12243. And what has been the result of that?—I would not give an opinion, because some mares never breed twice alike. The same cross-bred mare won't breed twice alike from the same horse.

12244. Do you look upon the breeding of the pure bred Hackney as a profitable part of your business?—If a man has got a good name it is the most profitable, but many men have done very badly by trying to breed the show horse.

12245. Would you recommend the Hackney stallion to cross with the ordinary mares of the country about you?—It in every way depends upon what you want the produce to do; for a working animal the thoroughbred in every sense of the word.

12246. What class of mares do you put to your thoroughbred sires?—I have two thoroughbred mares, and I have mares to show, and for breeding hunters.

12247. Do you sell any horse as a carriage horse that is got by a thoroughbred?—Yes, when they misfit for hunters, they generally make useful carriage horses. I breed from sizy mares to small class thoroughbred with good action, good colour, and good limbs, and I find I have generally a useful carriage horse if they misfit for a hunter.

12248. Yorkshire men are devoting themselves a good deal more than they used to breeding Hackneys?—Yes.

12249. What is the effect?—The effect is, that where they have got show horses they have done pretty well—very well indeed—with many of them; but with some of them badly. If they are not fortunate enough to produce show horses, which foreigners and every one else come to buy, they get a very poor price indeed.

12250. We have been told that the reason why they have given up to a considerable extent the breeding of hunters in Yorkshire is, that the class of mare that they bred the hunters out of has disappeared?—Yes; but I don't altogether agree with Mr. Legard in the way they disappeared. I think when the bad times came for the farmers, when corn went down in price, the little farmer looked to the first thing he could part with to reduce his expenses in any way, or to turn a little money, and he found that the old thoroughbred mare, the old blood mare he had got about the place, could be parted with by him. And there was some one who had a little money left, and he knew the mare, and saw what she bred, and he went and purchased her. That is the way they went, and he has never been able to get her back.

12251. And then he turned his attention rather to the Hackney?—Yes. The farmers found that people were getting rather large prices for horses, and they got a filly or foal, and the young men have begun to breed from them and some of the odd ones have done very well, and others badly.

12252. When you produce a high class animal it gets a big price?—Yes; very well.

12253. You don't consider the price very profitable if you can only breed a light carriage horse or that kind of animal?—Certainly not.

12254. You say that in breeding with the object of getting hunters you found a misfit is likely to become valuable, and sell at a fair price as a carriage horse?—If he has got the size.

12255. What becomes of the misfits of the Hackneys? I mean not the pure bred but the ordinary?—There is a very good thing about them; as soon as they are put into work they are very soon done, we are not troubled with them very long, they don't last.

12256. Lord LONDONDERRY.—You have three stallions, I understand, a Hackney, Shire, and thoroughbred, do you limit them to a certain number of mares a piece?—They rarely leave home, I cover very few but my own.

12257. Which is the more popular?—The Hackney is more popular in Yorkshire than the thoroughbred.

12258. Do you sell the produce of your breeding yourself?—Oh, yes.

12259. Direct to dealers, or do you supply customers?—For my hunters I have good customers

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amongst gentlemen. I "make" them myself and my son "makes" them, and I ride them until they are five or six years of age, and if they are good enough I can get plenty of gentlemen to buy them. Several gentlemen have come to me six years in succession for weight-carrying hunters.

12260. You would not yourself think of crossing a hunting mare with a Hackney to get a hunter?—It would be the worst you could have to ride across country.

12261. You think Hackneys should be kept entirely to their own class?—Well, I have occasionally bought—I never breed one from a blood mare by a Hackney horse—very beautiful riding horses and beautiful harness horses, and occasionally you can get a very superior animal now from a superior class of Hackney—a blood-looking Hackney from a blood mare.

12262. It must be a good mare?—You have a fair chance, but the best mares don't always breed the best. You find the common mares if well bred breed the best animals.

12263. Have you been in Ireland at all yourself?—No.

12264. You don't know the class of mares that it is proposed to improve the breed of, in the west, by crossing with these Hackneys?—No; I have bought many Irish horses, but have never been there.

12265. Do you think a Hackney crossed with a poor class of mare is likely to breed an animal worth money in the market?—I should have very poor faith in breeding from a Hackney in that case.

12266. From a poor mountain pony you would not get much?—I am afraid not, but I could not give an opinion because I have never seen the cross. I am afraid you would not get size enough.

12267. What height are your Hackney stallions?—I have two of my own, but of course I cannot use my own because they are from my own breed, and I have to use other people's. I like a Hackney stallion 15.3 hands for selling purposes with good colour and good action, because I must look for the gelding market. I must not look for the little trotting things which would not sell at all.

12268. Do they go out of England, abroad? Do the foreigners buy them?—Yes, I have to make geldings of them and sell them to dealers. I don't know what they do with them.

12269. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say that Hackneys don't wear?—Certainly, they don't last.

12270. And for that reason you think that they don't remain in the country long—in the East Riding?—They don't seem to work.

12271. In the main the high class Hackney at the present moment is a show animal more or less?—Yes, exactly.

12272. Is it the case that second rate Hackneys and the half-bred ones do not sell now as well as some few years ago?—I think not, for the reason that we are getting more of them. A few years ago there were not so many bred, and the consequence was there were not quite so many of the class you speak of. Now you are getting more of them, and they make less money.

12273. And I suppose other people besides you discovered that they didn't wear, and that might affect them?—Yes; but there is a difficulty in getting rid of these at all.

12274. Do you think that the blood of the Hackney will remain in the East Riding now it has got a firm hold there, and that will make it very difficult in after years to return again to the high-class hunter breeding or the high-class carriage horse breeding?—Well, if it is remunerative we shall soon get back again into the other breeds. As soon as ever the craze for the Hackney gives over they will return to breeding other horses, but it will take some time of course.

12275. I haven't any doubt you would clear out of them altogether if you found they were not remunerative; but still there are a great many men that would not be able to clear out of them entirely, and they would go on with the mares they had with this stain in their blood?—There is no doubt about that.

12276. If the public know of the stain, and thought it to be a bad one, it would damage the prestige and the sale of the East Riding horse?—As hunters, there is no doubt of it.

12277. You find you can get size enough with the thoroughbred sires for what you want in breeding?—My experience has been that I got more size with the thoroughbred horse than with any other horse; you get more power and more substance.

12278. And if you select thoroughbred sires with action you find the produce out of half-bred mares has action enough for all useful purposes, generally speaking?—There are thoroughbred horses to be got with as good action as any Hackney in the world. I have mentioned several with as fine action and more quality of action. The action I speak of is not action up and down, but it is a horse with liberty of shoulder action and hock action. If you can get that in a thoroughbred he is quite as sure as a Hackney to show it in what he gets.

12279. You think that liberty of shoulder action is a valuable thing in harness horses as well as in a hunter?—In every horse because it makes him able to work that has action in his walk as well as in his trot, with liberty of shoulder action, will do more work by half than the one who has not got action.

12280. Usually, has the Hackney got that liberty of action. I know he has got very magnificent knee action, but has he got that shoulder action that you require?—Certain breeds have. There are two or three sorts of action with the Hackney—quality of action is the action I speak of.

12281. Then all the Hackneys that are in the stud book are not of this particular breed, and don't show the same action that you require?—Some people like one class of action, and some another; it is the shoulder action and liberty of action and quality of action that I want. I don't care whether it is of a thoroughbred or Hackney or cart horse, or any other sort.

12282. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What strain of blood are your Hackney sires?—I have five Hackney mares in foal at the present time. I have one mare I got a second prize with at Windsor: she is of the "Denmark," "Danegelt," and "Fireaway" blood; she is in foal to "His Majesty." I have had two foals from her; one by "Agility," and another by a horse of Moores, "Rufus." I have one in foal to "Rosador," another to "His Majesty," and another to a horse Mr. Moore sold last year, "Clifden," for two or three thousand pounds. Those are pure bred Hackneys.

12283. Do you think the breeding of the pure bred Hackneys pays?—In many instances it is if you go to the pure bred blood you must have fashionable blood on both sides.

12284. Do you think the breeding of the half-bred Hackneys pays?—I should not think so.

12285. That is the cross of the Hackney with the ordinary mare?—I would not like to try it.

12286. With the ordinary mares of the country. Supposing you had a mare that was a little deficient in bone, would you go to the Hackney to get the increase in bone?—I would rather take the thorough bred.

12287. Taking the Hackneys all round as a general rule—I don't allude merely to the Yorkshire Hackneys—but taking them as a rule, do you think that they have good shoulders—that is as a breed?—Yorkshire Hackneys have, they are the best type, and they have both more quality and more shoulder than any other class of Hackney.

12288. All Hackneys are included in one Stud Book, are they not?—Yes.

12289. Therefore, when I speak of the Hackneys, I speak of the Hackneys generally. Do you think as a general rule that the shoulders are good?—Our

Yorkshire Hackneys, and the Hackneys from all other places are quite a separate animal. I have seen breeding between the Norfolk and the Yorkshire Hackney, but I never saw a cross from the Norfolk to the Yorkshire that ever did good in my life, and I have never seen one from Yorkshire back to the Norfolk that ever did any harm; it always did good. Therefore, I think, they are two different animals altogether. The Yorkshire animal has very much more quality than the Norfolk Hackney had, but when they have a large type of the Yorkshire mixed with them it is improving to the quality of their shoulders, and makes them more riding horses.

12290. What objection has a Yorkshire man then to using a Norfolk sire, as the Norfolk men use the Yorkshire sire there?—It has been tried, and it has done harm. It has been tried many times. They lose the quality; the Yorkshireman loses the quality; he gets all the thickness of head and the rough neck which our Hackneys never had before.

12291. Do you find any difference in the shoulders?—There are some classes of our breeds have marvellously good shoulders: most of the Yorkshire Hackneys have, and the Norfolks are a little deficient in the shoulders: they are thick across the top.

12292. Do you find the arms of the Hackney strong and large, or apt to be light?—I could not say that; they vary so much. One will be light and another won't be. As a breed I could not give an opinion.

12293. Is it a strong point in the Hackneys as a rule, to have good second thighs?—Yes; I think they are fairly good there.

12294. In Yorkshire?—Yes. I think they are fairly good, when they come to age, you know.

12295. And in Norfolk?—I haven't found fault with them there. It is more with the shoulders and the quality and the head and necks that I have found fault in the Norfolk, thick in the throat, rough underneath, common in their heads.

12296. From your experience of horse-breeding and what you have seen in Yorkshire do you think there is great danger of losing the sound, good mares out of the country?—Oh, yes.

12297. A great danger of that?—Yes.

12298. It would be almost impossible to replace them if you once let the good mares out of the country?—It would be very difficult to do, because the farmer would not have money. Very few farmers care sufficiently for them, and those who do haven't capital to keep them.

12299. Do you think in any horse-breeding countries they ought to be very careful in not letting the sound mares go out of the country?—Certainly; that is the first thing they should care for.

12300. Mr. CAREW.—Have you ever tried the same mare with the thoroughbred and the Hackney?—I haven't, but I have an experience of a person who has.

12301. With what result?—Some of you gentlemen well know a horse that Sir Walter Gilbey bought called "Danegelt"; I suppose he gave the highest price for any Hackney horse for this one—£5,000. He was near me many years. He covered three mares on one farm that I know; one was a Cleveland bay, another a Yorkshire cart mare, and the third was one with either one or two crosses of blood—I think two. I had a little thoroughbred horse that came from Lord Durham, and I think he never cost more than £20. I gave £20 for him, and sold him again for £20. He got three colts from the same three mares. I got two of these colts; one made £225 and the other £220. The one from the cart-horse was sold to Mr. Toynbee for £210. Now, these same mares were put to "Danegelt." I won't be certain, but I know they brought three foals, and I think they brought five. There never was one of these foals made £35.

12302. CHAIRMAN.—As to the latter part of the statement, are you certain about that; of course you know for certain what you got for your own horses?—Perhaps I ought not to go so far as that. I saw two of them at a fair, and the man that had them said he was asking £35 for the best; and what he got for them I don't know, but he had not sold it.

12303. Mr. CAREW.—Was your horse a Hackney?—No, a little thoroughbred.

12304. Have you ever put the same mare to a Hackney and to a thoroughbred?—These mares were put to the Hackney and to the thoroughbred.

12305. Oh! I see; your own was a thoroughbred and not a Hackney?—Mine was a thoroughbred horse, and he got on to the same three mares. He got the three first, and "Danegelt" got on to them afterwards. I won't say there were five foals—I had better say three—but there wasn't one of them I would have bought at any price, and the others were three useful horses.

12306. Mr. WRENCH.—What size were these mares?—One was a mare I think by "Iron Duke"—a blood mare sizing 16 hands high—and the other was a half-coaching Cleveland mare, 15.2½; the third was a cart mare—a little undersized cart mare. I bought two myself, and a neighbour of mine bought the other.

12307. Your experience is that a Hackney cross is much better with a blood mare than with a cross-bred mare from what you said before?—I would not put a Hackney horse on to a cross-bred mare at any price. I think you have a fair chance to get a good animal from a blood mare or a very good one from a Hackney mare by a blood horse. I happen to have two or three very superior animals out of a nice quality Hackney.

12308. And I suppose what happened in this experiment with "Danegelt" might happen to any horse?—Certainly; it was a cross-bred trial, that is what it was. "Danegelt" has got some of the best horses we ever had and I should say he has got some of the very worst.

12309. You say the Hackneys are not worked now. Is not the reason that it is because they are becoming so valuable?—There might be something in that. But I always notice that our farmers who have Hackneys, if they want to ride or drive, buy horses with a cross or two of blood.

12310. Are they bred from animals that used to drive long distances and do a great deal of work?—I heard of it.

12311. Have you any reason to doubt it?—I have never seen them do it.

12312. It was before your time?—Before my time.

12313. Do you think if any other style of horse breeding paid the Yorkshire farmers better that they would not turn to it?—Of course they would.

12314. They breed Hackneys because they find it pays best?—They get the price.

12315. You don't like Norfolk Hackneys nearly as well as the Yorkshire?—I do not.

12316. And still you sent a couple of your mares to "Agility"?—Yes; when a three-year-old, but he was a finer type than any one I had ever seen; but he has not improved, and it is my impression that he is not quite so good looking as he was.

12317. Do you think, as a rule, that thoroughbred horses produce stock with as good action as Hackneys?—Not quite so high, but with quite as much liberty, and rather more so.

12318. When you go to a fair, does not action help you to sell a horse?—I should think so; you are right.

12319. If you are dealing with horses that have no action, would it not sometimes be desirable to have extravagant action on the side of the sire in order to get pretty good action?—Yes; but I contend you can get action in the thoroughbred—you must have action.

12320. If you want to sell?—Yes.

12321. CHAIRMAN.—I gather from you generally that you think it profitable to breed the pure bred Hackney?—Certainly.

12322. But that you should not think it particularly profitable to breed the half-bred Hackney for light harness purposes?—I don't

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12323. When you say that they breed Hackneys in Yorkshire so much because they find it profitable, are we to take that in conjunction with what you have told us before, that for certain reasons the class of mares disappeared that they used to breed hunters out of. You agreed, I think, with Mr. Legard that the class of hunting mare had disappeared, only you attributed it to a different cause?—Yes.

12324. Is it your opinion that owing to the disappearance of that class of mare they cannot breed hunters profitably?—Well, I don't think the people that are breeding the Hackneys at present—the best class breeds—would exchange to blood ones—certainly not.

12325. Not the pure bred Hackneys, but I am talking of the general run of farmers who breed the Hackney for carriage purposes?—I don't think we scarcely realise how badly our small Hackneys are to sell. I think we have never been selling for working purposes, or very little up to this present time, but we find that the second class are making less money.

12326. What I wanted to get at from you is, putting aside the breeding of these larger high-class pure-bred Hackneys, whether the Yorkshireman breeds Hackneys for harness purposes because it is more profitable than any other kind of breeding, or because he finds it more profitable now he is unable to breed hunters as well as he could before owing to the mares having disappeared—in other words, has the production of hunters been replaced to a considerable extent by the production of harness horses, because the latter was more profitable, or because the hunting mares have largely disappeared?—None of us try to breed harness horses. We try to breed something better, and many of them turn out to be harness horses, and we have to make the best we can of them.

12327. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Don't you think it is rather the case that they breed these Hackneys and half-bred Hackneys now because there are in the East Riding such a large number of first-class Hackney stallions in the country that they are really obliged to go to them—the smaller men, I mean?—I think it is to a certain extent the fashion, but we are not breeding many cross-bred Hackneys. Most of the Hackneys that are bred in Yorkshire are all bred with the idea of getting one to win in the show yard. There are very few cross-bred Hackneys bred in Yorkshire. No farmer that I know of is breeding cross-bred Hackneys at all. The mothers and sires are all entered in the Hackney book, or they would not have them. Only a very small proportion are by any but pure-bred Hackneys.

12328. Do you think the reason of that is, to a certain extent, that, as you say, the cross bred—that is, the produce out of a half-bred mare by a Hackney stallion—is unreliable. He does not breed true; that you cannot be sure what you are going to get?—Certainly you cannot be sure of what you are going to get; in fact, out of the cross-bred mare you scarcely ever are sure. You must have purity of blood on one side certainly to breed with any fair chance of getting a useful animal.

12329. As a hunting man yourself, do you ever hunt any Hackneys?—Oh, no; I very much dislike the cross.

12330. They don't do for riding purposes?—I differ from Mr. Legard. I think it is the worst cross we can have. I hunt in a ploughed country, and the second ploughed field always finds the Hackney cross; I never knew it to miss yet.

12331. Their stamina is not what you would like for that particular purpose?—No.

12332. Lord RATHDONNELL.—What I was going to ask was, if you breed Hackneys for something better than harness, what do you breed them for? You answered, I think, the show yard?—The show yard, or to sell to go to the show yard.

12333. Mr. LATOUCHE.—You saw a certain number of Irish horses sold in Yorkshire?—Yes; I bought a good many.

12334. You never bought any Irish mares to breed from?—No.

12335. You never saw any Irish cross-bred mares covered in Yorkshire?—Yes; I know two by Irish mares from Lord Midleton's horse, "Sherebrook," and I know two by mares that came from Ireland, but they were good-looking mares that cost from £70 to £80 when they were rising four-years-old.

12336. You never saw any of the produce of mares of that description by Hackney stallions?—I cannot call to mind at present; I don't think I have. There is, no doubt, that they have been odd ones bred that may, but I don't know.

12337. Would you recommend the cross of a Hackney stallion with such a mare?—Certainly not, because the produce would have to go to work. When I supplied carriage horses to different gentlemen, I know if they were Hackney-bred horses, and I supplied Hackneys with one or two crosses of blood; they asked me for one with blood the next time they came. I invariably found that.

12338. The less Hackney and the more blood the better horse?—Yes, for wearing purposes; but, for driving in and out of town, for showing and looking well, the others would do very well. I have a farm—twenty miles away—and I have had to go, for fifteen or sixteen years over there, so that I have had a very fair trial of what is best to ride or drive, and I always like one cross of blood.

12339. Are you an East Riding farmer?—Yes.

12339A. Mr. LATOUCHE.—We have heard that the East Riding farmers are sensible, capable, common-sense, practical men.

12340. Mr. WRENCH.—When you talk of cross-bred mares from which you breed harness horses, most of these mares have some cart-blood in them?—Yes.

12341. And, it is admitted, that the Hackney does not cross well with cart-horse blood?—Some of the best hunters I have ever had in my life have been from Yorkshire cart mares.

12342. With thoroughbreds?—Yes.

12343. These Yorkshire mares have always the cart-blood in them more or less?—Oh, yes; more or less.

Mr. Reynard.

Mr. REYNARD examined.

12344. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Yorkshire?—Yes.

12345. Are you engaged in breeding horses yourself?—Yes.

12346. To a large extent?—Limited; I should say I farm between 600 and 700 acres, and so I breed a certain amount of farm animals, and having been a hunting man all my life I have bred myself more hunters. A few years ago when this Hackney fashion was at its height I was given a couple of mares, and living as I do, in the centre of a large Hackney breeding district, I thought I could not do better than try my hand at it; however, the results have not been very encouraging.

12347. You were given two Hackney mares?—Yes.

12348. You don't keep any stallions of your own?—No; I live in a district where what are reckoned to be the best Hackney stallions are available. I never took sufficient interest in the Hackney to induce me to have a stallion of my own, and besides there are so many, even when I started I considered the market was rather over-stocked.

12349. You breed cart horses?—Yes, for my farm purposes, and then hunters for my own pleasure, more with a view to pleasure than profit.

12350. Then you tried the experiment with the two

Hackney mares, were they pure-bred?—Yes, and I put them to the most fashionable—well I won't say most fashionable—to fashionable sires of the day, and selected the sires to the best of my judgment. I did not take the first I saw, but I looked to the conformation of the sires, and compared them with the mares I proposed to put to them, and then compared the pedigrees, so that I used a fair amount of caution in mating my mares.

12351. The object being to breed high-class animals?—I did not expect to breed high-class animals at first, because they were not high-class mares, they were not fashionably bred, they had not the conformation.

12352. And what was the result?—Nothing encouraging; they will be what your last witness described, they will soon wear out. I don't know what will become of them eventually.

12353. Did you discontinue that?—I have one mare left now, and I don't think I shall breed from her again.

12354. Out of what kind of mares have you bred your hunters?—The mares I began from first were mares with at least four crosses of blood, and I have had some very serviceable animals from them, horses that have carried me well in Holderness, which is a very heavy country.

12355. With what kind of sire?—Thoroughbred; I have used some sires that have not been Queen's Premium winners, but I have used a good many of the Queen's Premium winners, notably, "Peppermint," "Sherbrooke," and "Mosshawk."

12356. You have bred them for your own use?—Yes; I have tried the experiment of putting a hunter mare, a mare with four known crosses of blood that I could positively trace, and there were more behind which I could not really verify, and therefore never gave her credit for, but from the conformation of the mare herself I should judge she had several more crosses than those four I knew of; she was rather light of bone, and as an experiment I put her to a strong Hackney in the hopes of getting more bone. It was a theory that I think Mr. Burdett-Coutts started a great many years ago now, I thought it was worth trying, that was the idea of putting a thoroughbred or nearly thoroughbred mare to a Hackney horse, and in the produce you would get more bone and increased action, so that in case it did not turn out to be a hunter it would prove a very useful and saleable harness horse. Well, my first venture at that was a failure. I put it to a horse called "Dorington" by "Denmark," who was at that time thought a good deal of. After that I went to blood, and used a thoroughbred horse called "Lambton."

12357. What was the result of the Hackney cross?—A little underbred thing with no action; well it had a nice trotting action but it had not size, it took after the mare's action; I sold it for a park hack. After that I went to blood, and this mare bred me several very good foals, the eldest is ten years old; I am riding it now. Five or six years ago the mare bred me rather a smaller foal, but the thoroughbred then I liked, and I thought I would try the experiment again, and this time I picked out a very strong Hackney horse that had a strong suspicion of a carting cross on one side. The result of that cross was even lighter than my "Dorington" one, a very nice pretty little mare, but nothing more than a hack, and not more than a twelve stone one at that. The following year I put her to the thoroughbred horse again, and she has bred me a very promising colt. I also tried the Hackney cross, the same strong horse I spoke of, to a mare by "Peppermint," a thirteen stone hunting mare, one I bred, that was out of a mare by "Bass Rock," that I had hunted, and the result of that was a nice up-standing horse, but I tried to hunt him and found he was so soft he could not go beyond two fields, and I then reduced him to harness, in which he did fairly well.

12358. This particular Hackney you say had a strong suspicion of carthorse blood?—Yes, he was the strongest horse I could find in the district. One horse was full of the purest Hackney blood and the other horse was a horse that was in the Hackney Stud Book, but still there are ins and outs of breeding, and there was a strong suspicion that there was a stain of carthorse blood.

12359. Was it a suspicion in his appearance?—It was a suspicion in his appearance, and as a matter of fact as well; those things are easily stated, but very hard to prove.

12360. Did you give us the name of the horse?—The second horse was "Cardoon," the strong horse.

12361. Mr. Wrench.—Was he not by "Foston Fireaway," belonging to a man named Kirby?—That is the horse; he was a very strong horse, and I thought would make an excellent cross with this light Theobald mare.

12362. Chairman.—And the result was unsatisfactory, principally on account of the softness?—Yes, there was not a great deal wrong with the conformation; he had bad shoulders, nasty thick shoulders, but it was his softness made me drop him.

12363. Then I gather you don't think highly of the Hackney strain as far as riding horses are concerned?—I don't think at all so, they have not the riding shoulders.

12364. As to harness purposes?—I have often said that for the Hackneys that you see in London up and down Piccadilly and once round the Park is a day's work, and they don't want to do that more than three days a week.

12365. And your objection to them as harness horses would be the same, that they are soft?—I think so; I have had either two or three, and when I drove them to the station one and a half miles from the house on a nice flat road they would go beautifully and step with their noses up, but when I wanted to go to Beverly, twelve miles off, and when I was three miles on the journey, they would drop their heads and the action was gone, and when you got half way you had to get your whip out.

12366. Do the farmers about you breed much?—Yes, a great deal, principally Hackneys; that Driffield district is given over to Hackneys now.

12367. What kind of Hackneys do they breed?—Very nearly all pure, with the large farmers they are all pure bred with a few exceptions. Some of the smaller men, like butchers and pig dealers and so on, when there was this boom in Hackneys if they had a nice quick-stepper or anything in the shape of a light animal that went in their trade cart, they put it to the Hackney and thought they were going to get something that would be worth perhaps £100.

12368. When you say "thought they were," do you imply that they did not?—Oh, it was a great disappointment.

12369. What do you call a small farmer about you?—A small farmer about us would be a man farming from thirty to fifty acres, but there are very few small farmers about Driffield.

12370. Don't you consider that breeding these pure bred Hackneys, high class Hackneys is a profitable business?—To certain men who have been at the business since it started, but I think men who have come into it later on and had not the mares that have been on the place for years and years, they will not have found it so profitable an occupation.

12371. As to breeding harness horses from the ordinary country mares by Hackney stallions, do you consider that a paying business?—I don't think it is if they have not a Hackney mare or a mare of the Hackney type; I am speaking of pure bred Hackney stallions, because I don't think there are any known half-bred ones, but if a man had a mare of the Hackney type and put her to a pure bred Hackney stallion he would expect to get a quick-stepping horse. Then if he had a mare of a rather heavier type he would be disposed to put her to a

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thoroughbred horse. Had I known that I should be asked to appear before this Commission I would have brought up some particulars with me, because I had the Queen's Premium stallion "Mosshawk" with me for two years, five or six years ago, and I kept a very careful record of the class of mares that were put to him, and if it would be thought interesting I think I could look up the papers when I get home and tell you exactly the class of mares that were put to him.

12372. I think that would be very interesting?—The groom was an intelligent man, and I was much interested in the subject, and I told him to be very particular to note down in his book. I had a book drawn out for him; he had to note down among other things the stamp of mare put to the horse, whether hunting mare, hackney mare, or cart mare; of course if there was no doubt about it he would put it down, but if there was any doubt I inquired into the matter and went and saw for myself.

12373. Do you know Ireland at all?—No; I have never been there.

12374. Well, putting on one side for a moment the question of breeding pure bred Hackneys for show purposes and so on, have you any experience at all in Yorkshire of the results of the Hackney sire with the country mare?—I know of very few instances where he has been used on anything but thoroughbred, or what I will call book-Hackney mares. I have only my own experience as to the result of the Hackney stallion on anything but book mares.

12375. I suppose you could not very well give us an opinion as to whether the Hackney stallion—the pure-bred stallion—put to a small light class of mares, such as exist in the West of Ireland, would be likely to breed a saleable horse?—Not having seen the mares I would not like to answer that question, but I may mention that a friend of mine interested in horse-raising in the North-west of Canada had a light weedy mare on his ranch, and thought to improve the saleable qualities of the produce by introducing the Hackney blood. He came over to the East Riding of Yorkshire, bought two stallions there, and I have never heard that the experiment was a success; I have never heard of his getting more than about £30 for any one horse. He sent a consignment over one time and I should not like to say without the book what he got for them, but the price was disappointing and not remunerative.

12376. But about you in Yorkshire, they do not breed this kind of horse?—I have not heard of any; I don't think that cross is resorted to.

12377. You cannot say whether there is any great demand for that class of animal?—I should say there would be none.

12378. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—In your opinion from what you know, should you think that the cross of the Hackney would be deleterious on a breed that is now mainly thoroughbred crosses, I am speaking of the Irish mares?—From my experience I should be inclined to think so.

12379. And for the reasons that you gave that they are soft?—Yes, they are soft and they are not riding horses, and the present craze in breeding these Hackneys is to sacrifice everything to extravagant action. They are losing their backs and ribs, they seem to look to nothing but action, so what little stamina the Hackney might have they are fast breeding it out of him.

12380. And therefore for general purposes you should object to the cross being introduced on to the Irish mare?—I think so. I think as a general purpose horse the Hackney is not all desirable.

12381. Of course our inquiry does not relate to the high class Hackney to any great extent, not to the pure Hackney, it really relates in the main to what would be the cross breed produced both in the first cross and crosses hereafter?—Well, from my own knowledge in the Driffield district Hackney horses that are not quite good enough for show are a perfect drug in the market. You don't know where to place them, and you don't know what price you may get for them.

12382. And have you any experience as one of the witnesses told us that you cannot depend on breeding true form from the Hackney out of the half-bred?—Certainly, it may come to nothing.

12383. And you think you can to a great extent rely on breeding true form when breeding from a pure bred, a thoroughbred?—To a great extent. I think when you have seen the first foal from a mare by a thoroughbred horse you can to a certain extent calculate what the produce may be.

12384. You don't think that there are such a great many half-bred Hackney-crossed animals in the East Riding?—I don't know of any.

12385. Lord RATHDONNELL.—It has been given in evidence that Hackney breeders breed solely for action, and that they leave conformation out of the question, is that in your opinion a sound method of breeding horses?—Very much the reverse. I should breed for conformation first. I like a good top piece, a place for the heart to work in, some big ribs and a back, and I also am particularly fond of shoulders, which is a thing you very seldom find in these modern Hackneys. I say modern advisedly, because the Hackney of to-day is very different from what I remember him twenty-five years ago. They used to call them roadsters then at the local shows, and some of those roadsters had true action, not the extravagant action you see now-a-days. I should say they would be pleasant horses to ride twenty years ago, but these have been improved off the face of the East Riding. You don't see them there now.

12386. Then you think in breeding horses, as in breeding anything else, that conformation is the first thing?—Constitution and conformation, and if a horse has true conformation I hold his action will not be very far wrong. But in order to breed with whatever mare you have you must look for something to mate her with. That has been my object in breeding. I have not taken the first horse that came by, but I have gone out of my way to try and find—I don't say that I have succeeded—but to try and find horses that by their conformation would correct the weak points in my mares.

12387. Mr. WRENCH.—Do I understand you to say in answer to Lord Rathdonnell that the men about Driffield do not take conformation into account?—I should not like to go quite as far as that. Hackney breeding now has become a sort of system; they look to the blood. Certain strains of blood are very successful in the show yard, and men will go to that strain of blood at once in the hopes of getting a winner.

12388. About Driffield you have some very good examples of Hackney breeders?—Yes.

12389. Do you think Mr. Moore does not breed well?—He does, but he will take conformation and the breeding, the line of blood into account.

12390. You would say that he is intelligent in the matter of conformation?—I think he takes great pains in mating his mares.

12391. You don't condemn all Hackneys, even at the present day, do you?—There are some good ones, but I take it that they are not riding horses.

12392. I meant for harness?—Well, I think they are more for show than for work.

12393. I am not talking of what the tendency of the shows is to produce these extravagant goers, but I mean in the Hackneys in the East Riding. Can you not find horses that are descended from the old roadsters?—Yes, that is what Moore has. The principal lines in his stud are from mares that were these old roadsters. The class of mares I speak of that had good riding shoulders, and you could ride them for ten or twenty miles without your being tired, or their being tired either. Moore is one of the few men who have got those and stuck to them, and then he has

judiciously crossed out, so I should say you would get as good Hackneys with Moore as you could find. At the same time I should not like to say that a great many of them were not a bit soft, did not like long journeys, or too many of them.

12394. You think they have bred out the old type?—Most people have.

12395. Do you find that there are many good Hackney mares to be given away. You said you had two given to you?—Oh, yes, under peculiar circumstances, but I have seen many sold at a pretty good give-away price.

12396. Do you mean seeing how they were bred?—They were Norfolk bred. They are in the book.

12397. Do you know what stallion either of them was by?—I could tell you in a moment, if you allow me to look.

12398. It does not matter. When you say you went out of your way to find good horses, do you think you were rather unfortunate in selecting "Dorington" and "Cardoon"?—I may.

12399. Do you know "Dorington" was sold a short time ago for a very small price?—That was "Dorington II.," old "Dorington" is dead.

12400. How long ago was this experiment you made?—That mare was put to "Dorington" in 1880 or 1881.

12401. I thought it was more recently?—She would be put to "Cardoon" seven or eight years ago.

12402. Now take "Cardoon." You say he has some trace of cart blood in him?—Well, it was strongly suspected.

12403. Do you know that he was not considered good enough to keep as a stallion?—I don't know about good enough.

12404. His owner did not keep him?—No, he had not the accommodation for him.

12405. He was a common-looking horse?—Yes. There are plenty commoner. I mean, that is hardly a test. My idea was going to as strong a horse as I could find.

12406. Even though he had a trace of cart blood in him?—Yes. A suspicion, I think, I said.

12407. Have you ever seen the produce of Hackney stallions with thoroughbred mares? The produce of a thoroughbred mare by a Hackney stallion?—No, I cannot call it to mind.

12408. Then when you talk of the country-bred mares Yorkshire, are they not all more or less mixed up with cart-horse blood—the half-bred mares in Yorkshire?—It would be very difficult to say how some of them were bred.

12409. But there are a good many animals that really don't show much quality that you find among the small farmers?—They have what I call undersized cart-horses, but of the cart-horse type—not of the light type at all—probably that have not been big enough to work on these large, strong-land farms, and they are sold for what they will fetch.

12410. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Have you ever seen anything of the stamp of mare that is in the west part of Ireland?—No, I have not. I have never been in Ireland.

12411. Have you seen Hackneys crossed with a poor class of mare?—No, I have not.

12412. You have no idea of what result would be attained by crossing the Hackney with a light mare?—No, I merely instanced this case of a friend of mine who was in Canada and crossed some of the mares they had on the ranch—bad shouldered, weak-necked mares, and as far as he has ever told me, the cross was not a success.

12413. CHAIRMAN.—You have not seen them yourself?—No, I have not seen them. It is only hearsay.

12414. I should gather from what you have told us that if you wanted to breed hunters you would not consider Hackney blood advisable?—No, I don't think so.

12415. We have heard—I don't know whether it is the case about Driffield—that in Yorkshire generally the supply of hunters and the highest class of carriage horses has fallen off. That the buyers cannot get them in Yorkshire any more?—I fancy that is quite true.

12416. That has been attributed to various causes—to the introduction of the Hackney breed, and to the fact that the hunter mares have disappeared, and so on. Have you any opinion on those points?—Yes. I think it is quite true that the hunter mares have disappeared, and then this Hackney breeding industry got such a fillip a few years ago, men who had been breeding these Hackneys in a small way got such encouragement, and high prices were given for stallions, and very high prices were given for mares. Then there arose a foreign demand, so everyone rushed into breeding Hackney. Now, the law of supply and demand comes in. People have got supplied. People who wanted to start studs have got their foundation stock, and there is not the demand for the inferior animals for breeding purposes, and, therefore, unless you have got anything quite first-rate—good enough to show—it is a drug on the breeder's hands. So, I fancy, in that Driffield district there have been some very great disappointments from the Hackney breeding. It sprang up suddenly and has died away.

12417. It has been suggested to us that the Yorkshiremen in general, the farmers, would be glad enough to revert to breeding hunters and that class of animal if they could, but they cannot, because the mares have disappeared. Is that so, do you think at all?—I am afraid it is. And, you see, they have learned a lesson in this way, that in the breeding of Hackneys came so much sooner to profit than the hunter, and there was so much less risk to run. A promising Hackney they can get rid of at a good price from two to three-year-old. I am speaking of the good Hackneys, and there is no more risk to be run than to take him to the show and run him up and down in a string, or if they keep him a little longer, he has just to be run in harness. Whereas with the hunter you must keep him to four years old, and do your best to lame him so as to "make" him. That is merely a theory of my own. They find that the Hackney comes so much quicker into profit, and there is so much less risk attending the breeding of him that they would be slow to go back to breeding hunters, and, of course, in that Driffield district, from Flamborough Head to Spurn Point, and west as far as Pocklington and York, with very exceptional breeders, there were never very many harness horses bred. In that Holderness district there were more hunters bred.

12418. I should gather from you that you think the producing a very valuable Hackney is still a paying business, but does not pay as well as it did because the demand has rather fallen off?—That is so, if you can produce the best article in the Hackney line, you will get a remunerative price for it, although the price is not so remunerative as it used to be, and one thing that points to that is that so many of these men who own these very first-class stallions have reduced their covering fees. A few years ago there was nothing under five guineas, and anything that had anything of a record was ten guineas. Now you can get them at five guineas and three guineas, which shows the demand has slackened.

12419. As to the inferior Hackney, or the cross of the Hackney with the country mare, you don't think there is much demand for that?—There is very little demand for the inferior Hackney, and I don't know any case where the country-bred mare has been mated with a Hackney.

12420. Do you know at all whether these inferior Hackneys have been bought as remounts?—I have never heard of them. I think there is very little remount doing in our part of the country. For two years I gave prizes at local shows for three-year-old horses suitable for cavalry remounts. They brought

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very few entries—did not take at all, so I gather there is very little army-buying done in our part of the country.

12421. Have you ever considered at all any steps that could be usefully taken to keep good mares in the country, to induce the farmers not to sell them?—Well, there is the giving of prizes at local shows. I have often thought about it, but it would be a difficult scheme to work, if it could be done, where a man had a good mare and was breeding from her every year to give him a bonus on his foal. But all those schemes are so difficult to work out. But I think that having numerous local shows and giving prizes there of fair value, and if possible to give several prizes of equal value, would have the effect of rather encouraging breeding. I am sure of one thing, that the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding has given horse breeding somewhat of an impetus, because it has put a sound horse at the command of anyone who cares to use him at a low fee, and, of course, the horse's whereabouts is well advertised, so anyone who takes any interest in really producing good horses always knows where he can command the services of at least a sound horse.

12422. We have had a great deal of evidence before us that Ireland has been considerably denuded of the best mares which are bought to go abroad, and some witnesses think the only remedy is to provide the country with sound and suitable stallions, and others, that something should be done to keep the mares in the country?—I am afraid it would have to be a very big scheme to induce men to keep mares in the country. Because when a buyer comes and offers a poor man a very good price for a mare it is a very great temptation to him to part with her, and one that very few men can resist.

George Richardson.

GEORGE RICHARDSON examined.

12423. CHAIRMAN.—You live near Leeds?—I live in Leeds.

12424. Are you engaged in dealing in horses?—I am.

12425. And have been for some time?—Twenty-five years.

12426. What class of horses do you deal in?—Hunters principally and harness horses, riding horses.

12427. And where do you buy them?—In Ireland.

12428. Buy all your horses in Ireland?—Yes, I am obliged to go to Ireland. I cannot get them in Yorkshire. I used to buy them in Yorkshire. Could get plenty twelve years ago, but now there are none left.

12429. Plenty of hunters, and the class of carriage horses you wanted?—Yes.

12430. What kind of carriage horses?—Sixteen hands to say 15.3 hands.

12431. In former days where used you to buy them?—From the breeders in Yorkshire.

12432. What age did you buy?—Fours and fives.

12433. Have you any objection to tell us at what kind of average prices?—It all depends on the animal; the lowest price we gave was about £60.

12434. What would you call a high price?—Oh, £120, that is for harness horses. I give a great deal more for hunters; £200 to £300 very often.

12435. And now you say you cannot get them in Yorkshire?—It is impossible to find them.

12436. How do you account for that?—Because they are breeding Hackneys. They have given over breeding hunters, and they have gone in for breeding what they call Hackneys.

12437. Do you suppose they have done that because it pays them better?—I think they have made a great mistake; it paid just at first; it was a fashion, everybody wanted Hackneys because they have this action, but it is only forced action for ten minutes that is all; if you ride or drive them four or five miles they tire, they are worthless.

12438. And in your opinion you think the farmer breeding horses has made a mistake?—I am sure of it; they have ruined all the farmers in Yorkshire, except a few that have got stallions and studs, three or four.

12439. Why do they not go back to breeding hunters?—They have not got the mares; they have sold their best mares. I remember fifteen or twenty years ago you could buy from ten to fifteen horses a week in Yorkshire; now you could not buy one good horse.

12440. Where have those mares gone to?—They have gone abroad; the foreigners have bought them all.

12441. And your opinion is that the horse breeder has done himself a good deal of harm?—I am sure of it; they cannot sell these inferior Hackneys; they cannot give them away; they cannot breed them with any size.

12442. I suppose the pure-bred, the best Hackney you can breed is a valuable one?—But there is no such thing as a pure-bred Hackney. You can get anything into the book; you can get anything in if it has taken a prize at the show, no matter how he is bred; if he can step a bit and get a prize you can get him into the book.

12443. The Hackney that would win a prize at a show, is that a valuable animal to breed?—My experience of show horses is very bad, about the worst horses you can find.

12444. Would it pay the breeder to produce him?—I cannot say it does. If you can get a good goer it pays him, but how many do they get, not many.

12445. What becomes of all the inferior Hackneys?—They are trailed about the country from fair to fair; they are very bad to sell.

12446. Have the Yorkshire farmers to your knowledge taken any steps to try and get back again to breeding hunters?—I am afraid they are too poor. They have lost their best mares and cannot replace them.

12447. Can you suggest any means by which if they were able to afford it they could replace them?—I don't know, I am sure, the farmers are very poor in Yorkshire in my experience.

12448. But assuming they are not very poor or could be assisted by many could these mares be re-introduced into the country?—They could be bought in Ireland. There are plenty of good mares in Ireland to be bought. What you want is strong thoroughbred mares, as strong as you can get them, and you cannot get them too well bred with strength. There are plenty in Ireland.

12449. You have since bought these horses in Ireland?—Yes.

12450. Whereabouts?—All parts, principally in the South and West.

12451. Not much in the North?—There are not many good horses bred in the North.

12452. Have you attended the principal fairs?—All the principal fairs all over Ireland except in the North.

12453. And you can find what you want there?—Well, they are getting rather difficult to find now. I remember the time when it was quite easy to find them, but it is not so easy now. Everybody is going over there to buy, and probably the hunters in Yorkshire are bought in Ireland as young ones and brought over and schooled and sold as hunters. Nearly all the farmers that can afford in Yorkshire go over and buy colts. Where one used to go at first a hundred go now.

12454. And the supply in Ireland has not kept up to the demand?—I am afraid it has not.

12455. Can you form an opinion as to whether the supply is as good as it was ten years ago?—I am sure it is not.

12456. Then not only in relationto the increased demand but absolutely there are not so many good horses?—I am sure there are not so many. It is a great mistake of Ireland to allow the good mares to go out of the country, something ought to be done to stop it.

12457. You said awhile ago that there were plenty of good mares?—Yes. Something ought to be done to prevent foreigners getting them. I have often seen a farmer riding a mare into the fair and he does not want to sell it and I offer him a good price and takes it.

12458. You think it objectionable for the foreigners to take the good mares, but you would not think it objectionable to take them to Yorkshire?—We should not lose them out of the country. A premium ought to be given at the show to induce a farmer to keep a good mare, and should he sell it he would forfeit the money. At present they give prizes to horses and not to mares, and I think more depends on the dams than on the sires.

12459. Assuming anything was done by the Government in the way of a grant of money towards horse breeding in Ireland, you think, at any rate, some of it should be devoted towards inducing farmers to keep their best mares?—I think so, certainly. You cannot breed horses without mares.

12460. How do you think that could be best done practically?—It would be rather hard to say. The only thing would be to give the farmer a mare to breed from that he cannot possibly sell.

12461. Have you any opinion as to the effect of the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland?—I think Hackneys are not any good at all. They are useless animals, except for show purposes—just for about five minutes, and then it is all over, and that action is forced action. They teach them to step and put all sorts of things on their feet, but if you drive them five miles they soon lose their action.

12462. You think he is not much use as a light harness horse?—No; if you drive them three or four miles they hang their heads and hit their hind legs against their fore ones. It is a misery to drive them.

12463. Do you know the extreme West of Ireland?—I go all over Ireland.

12464. You know the kind of mares the small farmers have on the seaboard?—I do, quite well.

12465. Would it not be a great advantage if more bone and substance could be introduced into that class of animal?—I should say if you got a short-legged thoroughbred horse with strength and action. You cannot get too much blood, if you only get strength with it.

12466. Don't you think a suitable Hackney would give them the substance and bone required?—Certainly not; they are soft-legged brutes and nothing short of it. They would be breeding back instead of breeding forward with Hackneys. You cannot get a horse too well bred if you only get strengh with it. You shall put the Hackney and the thoroughbred in harness and drive twenty miles. You will get through with the thoroughbred; you won't get through with the Hackney, or he will never come back if he gets through.

12467. Talking of the western districts of Ireland, do you think by any means they could breed hunters?—It would take some time, but they would improve the breed considerably if they had some good thoroughbred horses. I don't mean weedy horses, but strong, short-legged, that can carry some weight, 15.2 or 15.3.

12468. Supposing they turned their attention to breeding for harness purposes, what sire do you recommend?—Thoroughbred. There is no horse in the world, it does not matter whether harness or riding horse, so good as the thoroughbred.

12469. Have you seen any of the thoroughbred stallions standing in remote parts of the country?—I have seen them travelling about. There are some very weedy stallions in Ireland. I think it would be a great thing in Ireland if they were to licence stallions and not allow them to travel unless they passed a board of inspectors for soundness and strength and suitability. A great many of the stallions you see travelling in this country, and also in Ireland, are weedy things; no good at all. Of course the farmer is not sufficiently educated to know which is the best stallion; they are very ignorant as to breeding—a great many of the western farmers in Ireland. Of course, they are not all alike.

12470. Would you be content if, in the congested districts, say, the Government put suitable thoroughbred sires, and suitable Hackney sires at the same fees?—I should certainly not send the Hackney by any means—the greatest mistake, I think, ever was made. I told Mr. Jackson so when he was Chief Secretary. He asked me what I thought. I travelled over with him from Ireland one night, and I said, "It is the greatest mistake ever you made if you bring Hackneys into the country."

12471. How did you form that opinion?—I have seen so many of them, and bought a good many. I have had some of the best of Hackneys and shown them. I used to show a great deal years ago.

12472. I take it what you think would be necessary for Ireland is, perhaps, first of all, to keep good mares in the country?—If you possibly could.

12473. And secondly, the introduction of suitable sound thoroughbred sires?—Yes, with plenty of strength.

12474. And that you think for any purpose the introduction of Hackney blood would be bad?—Oh, very bad, I think.

12475. Do you consider the Hackney blood to be worse than Cleveland bay or coaching horse?—They are both bad enough, you cannot get anything worse.

12476-7. Have you not ever seen a good hunter out of a thoroughbred mare or out of a half-bred mare by a Hackney stallion?—Never in my life. If you find a good Hackney, if you drive him, I will guarantee he will trace back to thoroughbred blood.

12478. Don't they all trace back eventually to thoroughbred blood?—A great many of them to cart horses. Ten years ago you could get anything at all into the Hackney Book, if it won a prize at the show you could get it in quite easily.

12479. A great many horses go through your hands that you buy in Ireland?—About 300 or 400 a year.

12480. And the price you pay is the same as you did some years ago?—I don't think there is much difference.

12481. Do you buy at fairs?—I buy from dealers and at fairs, anywhere I see one.

12482. Have you agents over there?—Oh, no, I go there myself, I am there nearly every week.

12483. You have never been in the north?—Oh, yes, but the horses are not so good there; they are not worked so well as they are in the south, they are kept in the stable and housed up and fed and brought out fat, and as soon as you get them home and start to work them they get ill, you have to get that fat off. In the south and west of Ireland the horses are poorer and every day you work them they get better.

12484. Do you think the stallion you recommend for Ireland is to be obtained easily?—Quite easily; you could buy plenty at £200 apiece.

12485. Where would you get them?—All parts of Ireland. You don't want a horse that could win the Derby or Leger; what you want is a thoroughbred horse with strength and true action and sound and good colours.

12486. And you think they could be obtained?—For £200 each, quite easily, plenty of them.

12487. Lord LONDONDERRY.—I gather that you are not an admirer of Hackneys?—Well, I have had a great many of them, my experience is very bad.

12488. One gentleman stated that he had driven long distances with a Hackney, that they did not tire; you have tried them yourself and found they do?—I have indeed. The Hackneys they call now used to

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be called Yorkshire roadster mares, they were very good, they used to cross them with thoroughbred horses and they could stay; but those they have at present cannot stay at all, they are no good only just for show, just for about ten minutes and then they are tired.

12489. Then your idea would be that if these Hackney stallions got into the hunter-breeding countries and we crossed with mares that bred good hunters, they would ruin the breed of hunters there?—I am sure of it.

12490. You would not care to buy a hunter from one of these well-bred mares by a Hackney stallion?—Certainly not, you cannot have a hunter too well bred if he has strength. If you felt him tire take a pull at him and let him catch his wind. If you take a common horse, the first place he comes to he lies down and you cannot kick him up.

12491. You think a Hackney get would do this?—No earthly use at all.

12492. Have you bought hunters in Ireland?—Yes, all over Ireland.

12493. I suppose in Leinster, in Kildare and Westmeath, you bought most?—No, I bought plenty in Cork and Limerick.

12494. Of all sorts and sizes?—Yes, 15.3 hands.

12495. And up to varying weights?—Yes.

12496. As a rule, do you know anything about pedigree?—I don't care much about pedigree, he shows his pedigree himself as soon as you look at the horse.

12497. But you would not buy a horse unless it gave you the idea that it was by a well-bred horse and by a well-bred mare?—Certainly not, it is quite easy to tell a well-bred horse from a bad one.

12498. Do you find a large number of people go over from England?—Yes, a great many.

12499. Do you find that they will buy a horse that perhaps you reject?—I cannot say that.

12500. Is the supply there equal to the demand?—It is not, the demand is greater than the supply. I remember, ten years ago when I went to Ireland, it was very easy to buy horses. Now you have to travel a great deal about Ireland before you get a good horse.

12501. You see a great many horses that you reject?—I see many that are too young for me, that I cannot do with, I must have them four years old at least. I could buy plenty of young horses if I could afford to keep them, but I have no means of keeping them. I must buy them ready for sale.

12502. Is there a market for these young horses?—Oh, yes, there are plenty of markets for them.

12503. Those are by what, as a rule?—By thoroughbred horses.

12504. And there is a demand for them?—A good demand.

12505. And they fetch a good price?—A very good price. Plenty of farmers in England go over there to buy them and make hunters of them. I know farmers in Yorkshire who buy eight or ten at a time.

12506. Would they buy them if they were by bad horses or Hackneys?—They would not, they would not bring them to Yorkshire at all.

12507. Therefore, so far as Yorkshire is concerned, these animals would be a drug in the market?—Certainly, they could not sell them.

12508. You rather lament that there are not the same number of good mares in Ireland as there used to be?—Yes, I think the foreigners have taken the best mares out of the country, and it would be a good thing to stop them, although I sell a good many to foreigners, but if they are not stopped we shall soon be without horses.

12509. Why do you think they sell them?—Because they want to get the ready money; many a time I buy a mare that a farmer is riding into the fair, he does not want to sell the mare; I say "if you get a good price won't you sell her," and then they begin to study, and when I offer a good price they sell, but if you offer them a premium that they would forfeit if they sold the mare it would induce them to keep the mare.

12510. Supposing a better class of stallion were introduced into Ireland, do you think it would be worth the while of the farmer to keep that good mare, because she might, if she was a good breeder, make an annual income by her produce, that he would sell to people like you?—I think so. I think the stallions want to pass a Government inspection by practical men; a great many of the stallions that are sold to go to different parts of the country are weeds. Thoroughbred horses were supposed to be bred to improve the breed of horses, but they are simply machines for betting upon. If they were bred with more strength and substance, if they could not win a race, they would be worth £100 for a hunter or harness horse, but as they are now they are worthless, a great many of them, they are little weeds.

12511. I think you said in reply to the Chairman that you could buy any number of stallions that you think would be capable of doing what is wanted in Ireland at £200 a piece?—Buy them in England, there are plenty to be bought.

12512. What stamp of horse would you suggest?—A horse of 15.3 hands, to carry 13 stone 7 lbs. in weight, at least, you want them that strength.

12513. How bred?—It does not matter as long as they are thoroughbred.

12514. But you insist on their being thoroughbred?—Certainly.

12515. And you would not advocate any other class of horses being introduced?—Certainly not.

12516. You deprecate Clydesdale, Shire horses, and Hackneys?—I would not have anything but a thoroughbred; if you put a strong thoroughbred and cart horse together to plough, the thoroughbred horse would kill the cart horse if you keep ploughing all day.

12517. Have you seen any stallions in Ireland?—I have seen a great many, nearly all.

12518. Are they good or bad?—Some are good and some are bad.

12519. In the districts where there are bad stallions, have you bought some good hunters, animals you would like?—I bought some very good hunters all over Ireland, and sometimes you cannot believe how the farmers say a horse is bred, because if a horse in a district is getting good animals, they are sure to say the horse is by that sire.

12520. But still you would not buy a horse unless you liked his appearance?—Unless I liked his appearance and strength.

12521. The Chairman asked you if you had seen some of these mares in the congested districts, which, after all, the Hackney's were intended to benefit?—I have seen a great many of them coming into fairs, they are very poor mares.

12522. Do you think they are capable of being improved?—I am sure if they got thoroughbred stallions it would improve them, they would breed worse horses than there are now to the Hackneys.

12523. What would they breed to the thoroughbred stallion?—Riding horses, polo ponies, and Hackney horses.

12524. The first cross?—Perhaps not the first, the second one.

12525. You think it is a question of time?—Yes.

12526. You don't think in those poor districts they would get more stamina by being crossed with the Hackney?—I think not; there are plenty of thoroughbred horses with more bone than the Hackney, and the bone is much better. If you drive the Hackney five or six miles, next morning his legs are filled like mileposts, if you drive a thoroughbred horse his legs are as fine as silk.

12527. The ponies of the poorer classes in the West of Ireland have not much action?—No; I have not much chance of judging their action, because they walk into the fairs in carts.

12528. You would be careful in selecting a thoroughbred with action?—Certainly, I would buy a horse that goes straight and well, and goes well off his hind legs, and is well made, with good back and quarters. In all horses you want hind leg action as much as fore action. If you drive a horse that steps in front and does no go behind he soon tires, if you drive a horse that has good hind action he will always get his forelegs out of the way.

12529. As far as I gather your opinion from your experience of Ireland in all parts, is that there ought to be nothing imported to improve the blood but thoroughbred horses?—Certainly not; I would not send any horse but the thoroughbred.

12530. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Would you really mind a half-bred horse bred in the country for use in Ireland?—I would sooner have a thoroughbred one.

12531. Suppose you were not able to get the required number of horses?—I would prefer a thoroughbred; I think there are plenty to be got at an average of £200 each; it is not necessary he should be a fashionable sire as long as he is thoroughbred and has strength and quality.

12532. The Hackney in Ireland at present is more or less new, and there is no doubt that if you see a horse with a great action run up and down a street it is a very taking thing; do you think that the small Irish farmer is likely to be taken with this action and to use him as a stallion?—They would certainly, but if they once tried him they would not again.

12533. But that will take them three or four years before they know the harm that is done?—Of course; the Hackney stallions as they call them, are very flashy, showy, and taking for the time being, but they are no good; if you want to drive ten miles you cannot get them home again, if you ride them they are forging their hind feet against their fore ones, and hanging their heads, you will have to hold them up.

12534. You think if the Hackney is introduced into Ireland, it will produce a soft class of animal which will be detrimental hereafter?—Certainly, and the bone of the Hackney—as they call him—is very soft. If you drive a Hackney two or three miles, next morning his legs are filled and you see them when they are old mares with gammy legs; if you see a thoroughbred, his legs are as clean as steel.

12535. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—You are speaking, almost entirely, of the riding class?—I buy a good many harness horses.

12536. Light horses, not draft horses?—No.

12537. You say you buy very few horses in the North of Ireland?—Very few.

12538. Why is that?—Because they feed them so badly. They buy the colts in the South and take them to the North, and put them in houses and feed them on boiled food. They bring them out quite fat and fresh, and when you get home and start to work then you have to get all that fat off. They breed a great number of horses in the North of Ireland, but they are different from those in the South?—Yes, because they have not such blood as in the South.

12539. Any horses, almost, that you see in the North and take your eye and are saleable in your business came from the South originally?—That is so.

12540. You have travelled about the North of Ireland a good deal?—I have been all over it.

12541. Don't you think the North of Ireland is capable of producing the same class of horses as the South if they had the same blood there?—Quite so.

12542. With regard to useful horses for the farmer, do you think the Hackney blood is any value to them for their own purposes?—I think it is useless.

12543. It may be valuable for sale at an early age?—Yes; but they never give satisfaction. If you buy one once you won't buy one twice. If you put a Hackney and a thoroughbred horse in harness one will kill the other. You want horses for usefulness; people don't buy them to look at.

12544. You don't think the Hackney is useful blood to introduce for the harness horse independent of the riding horse?—Certainly not; they used to breed good horses in Yorkshire, because they used to have the old Yorkshire mares and cross them with thoroughbred sires; but now they are breeding from these Hackney stallions—they are simply between a cart-horse and these Yorkshire mares. There is a horse, "Star of the East," that used to take a great many prizes. He was a Hackney stallion; I believe he was from a cart mare.

12545. You have seen a great deal of what they call the re-mount class in Ireland?—I have.

12546. You know the class of horses I buy for re-mounts. We have had several gentlemen who have advocated the Hackney as a useful horse to cross for military purposes—more for riding than driving—are you of that opinion?—Certainly not.

12547. Do you think that his formation and action is useful?—I think it would be entirely useless.

12548. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I think you said you bought several mares in Ireland?—Yes; I buy more mares than horses.

12549. Do you buy for the foreign market?—Yes. I buy for the English market too, but I send a great many abroad, I sent 300 abroad last year.

12550. What age do you usually buy them at?—Four-year-old and upwards, nothing younger, unless it is a thoroughbred that has run—a racehorse.

12551. But you don't buy half-bred ones earlier than four?—No.

12552. Do you ever buy mares that are in foal?—Never; well, I have bought a few thoroughbred mares, but not half-bred mares.

12553. But if a half-bred mare happened to have a foal at foot, would you leave her alone?—I would not buy her at all.

12554. Did I understand you to say that your opinion was asked regarding the introduction of Hackneys into Ireland?—Yes, Mr. Jackson travelled over with me from Holyhead one night, he lives near me, and buys his horses from me, he asked me about it, and I told him then—it was a great mistake if he brought Hackneys in.

12555. CHAIRMAN.—You were not consulted by the Congested Districts Board?—Oh, no; we were just speaking as we travelled along.

12556. You gave no opinion in writing?—No; he just asked me for information and I told him what I thought.

12557. Lord LONDONDERRY.—Have you spoken to any of the dealers in the South of Ireland and ascertained their opinion on the introduction of Hackneys?—I never mentioned it.

12558. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—Would you buy horses with the same confidence in Ireland if you knew the Hackney horse had been largely introduced?—Certainly not.

12559. Have you ever seen any of the produce of these mares, that you bought, by a Hackney stallion?—I never bought any Hackney mares in Ireland to my knowledge.

12560. No, but you say you bought Irish mares, and probably sold some of them to people who live in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

12561. Have you ever seen them bred from?—I cannot say I have, but the mares I sell they breed from them after they have done for riding purposes.

12562. But you have never seen any of the produce of the Irish mares and the Yorkshire Hackney stallion?—No, I cannot say I have. Yes, I have, I sold Colonel Charlesworth a grey mare, he rode her for nine or ten seasons and put her to a Hackney stallion, but she bred nothing any good, and he gave the mare away to a farmer in the end.

12563. CHAIRMAN.—What did the farmer do with her?—I don't know; she was a very good mare, I bought her at Ballinasloe.

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George Richardson.

12564. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you breed any horses yourself?—I do not.

12565. Have you ever bred any?—I have not.

12566. When you talk of being in the West of Ireland, what fairs have you attended?—I go to all the principal fairs in Ireland.

12567. Just name the fairs you go to in Mayo?—If you just mention the names. I go to all the principal ones.

12568. Do you go to Belmullet?—I do not.

12569. Do you go to Achill?—I do not.

12570. Do you go to Clifden?—I do not. I never heard of the name of that fair.

12571. Or Oughterard?—I never heard of it.

12572. Swinford?—There are very little fairs there.

12573. Do you go to Westport?—Yes; I have been there.

12574. And you have been to Galway?—Yes; I go to Galway every year, to Ballinasloe, and I go to Boyle.

12575. But not to any of the other fairs I have mentioned?—None of the others mentioned.

12576. Do you go to Donegal at all?—No; I have not been to Donegal.

12577. Not into the county?—No; I have been in the county but not to any fairs there.

12578. Do you go to Kerry?—Yes.

12579. Where?—I forget the name of the fair, it was some years ago.

12580. Killorglin was it?—I could not tell you.

12581. Tralee?—I have been to Tralee many times.

12582. Do you know Cahirciveen or Dingle?—No; I have not been there.

12583. Have you been to Castletown Bere?—No.

12584. Skibbereen?—Yes.

12585. Schull?—No; I have not been there.

12586. So practically your experience relates to some inland fairs?—Yes; I go to the principal fairs, but those little fairs I don't go to, it would not pay me.

12587. You have not been to any of the places I mentioned?—I have not been to all the places you mentioned, they are not very large fairs.

12588. It merely exactly excludes the Congested Districts. Then do I understand you to say that you would introduce nothing but thoroughbred horses into Ireland?—Certainly.

12589. Was I correct when I thought you said you had seen nearly all the stallions in Ireland?—I have seen a great many of them.

12590. What do you think they mainly consist of?—There are some very good ones and some very bad ones.

12591. But what breed?—I have seen most of the thoroughbred stallions, but I have not seen any of the Hackney stallions.

12592. Have you seen any of the cart horse stallions?—I have not seen one in Ireland in my life.

12593. You don't know that a great many exist there?—I don't think so.

12594. Do you know at all the number of stallions there are in Ireland?—I don't know at all.

12595. You say you have seen nearly all of them?—I go to the principal shows and the stallions come there, and I have seen the stallions that come to the fairs round the towns, serving mares, I see them very often. Of course I have not been to private places to see the stallions.

12596. You would be surprised to hear that there are many cart stallions in Ireland?—I should be very much surprised.

12597. When you say that any horse can get into the Hackney Stud Book I suppose a horse could get in but would have no pedigree?—They could get in with a pedigree when I used to be showing ten or twelve years ago, they would give him a pedigree.

12598. Do you say that the pedigrees in the Hackney Stud Book are false?—They are not worth the paper they are written on.

12599. You don't think they are correct?—I am certain a great many are not, I know horses I have had and sold, and after taking prizes they have been got into the book, and I could not tell the pedigree because I did not know it.

12600. Do you object to the blood of the Suffolk punch in hunters?—I would not have that blood at all.

12601. Or Clydesdale?—Certainly not.

12602. Or Shire?—None of them.

12603. You think they would all be equally prejudicial to the hunter breeding?—Certainly; you cannot get a hunter too well bred.

12604. Do you think there is any danger if nothing but the thoroughbred is used of the produce becoming too light and weedy?—Certainly not, if you select the stallions, get suitable stallions; of course if you buy little weeds of stallions you are sure to breed weeds of horses. You want short legged strong stallions, not more than 15·3 hands.

12605. And you say those stallions are easy to find?—Quite so.

12606. Do you know that the Indian Government have great difficulty in finding them?—Because they don't go to the right place and the right people.

12607. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know as a matter of fact that that is so?—I know they say it, but I could find them plenty if they gave me the order.

12608. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you think that breeding polo ponies pays the breeder?—I think so, a good polo pony is worth a lot of money.

12609. And if a great many of the Irish witnesses that we have had said that the good mares were very scarce you would not agree with them?—Polo pony mares?

12610. No, good mares in Ireland generally, hunter mares?—I think there are a good many good mares in Ireland.

12611. You said there were plenty of good mares?—Yes, but of course if you keep draining the country they are sure to get short in time, they are doing that in Ireland every day, a great number of horses leave the country.

12612. What is your trade chiefly, in hunters or harness horses?—Both.

12613. About equal?—About equal.

12614. And is there as much trade do you think in harness horses as there is in hunters?—Oh, yes, quite as much.

12615. A trade that Ireland could supply?—Quite easily.

12616. Do you know anything about the trade in horses from America?—I have seen a great many of them.

12617. Are they coming over in increasing or decreasing numbers?—About twenty-five years ago they used to bring some of the best harness horses in the world from America, now they bring the worst; a great many are sold to run in cabs, or go to repositories to be sold.

12618. They compete with the second-class horses from Ireland, do they not?—I should think they do.

12619. Can you suggest any remedy by which this competition could be lessened or prevented in any way?—No, I don't think that I could.

12620. Do you think that the American horses that come over now are bad horses?—Very bad indeed; I think it is the produce of those Hackney stallions they have taken over.

12621. Do you know that American horses are sold in Ireland as Irish horses sometimes?—I know they are, but they are very easy to tell.

12622. Then you would be surprised if any horses so sold had taken prizes as hunters at shows?—I have seen them take prizes at the Dublin Show.

12623. Then we must have had some bad judges?—Judges don't ride them; half the judges that go to shows cannot ride, they just see the horse going round, but if they got up and rode them they would form a different opinion.

12624. You describe these miserable animals that

could only go a short way as bred from Hackneys, were they pure-bred Hackneys?—I don't think there is such a thing as pure-bred.

12625. Were they from what we call pure-bred Hackneys?—They were what they call the Hackney of the present day.

12626. Those that you drove were what they call pure-bred?—Yes. I gave over £200 a-piece for them, so they ought to be some of the best.

12627. CHAIRMAN.—I don't exactly remember what you said about the stallions in Ireland, but I don't suppose you meant us to understand that you had seen them all?—I could not possibly see them all, but of what I have seen I have seen some very good stallions. I think what you want to do is to induce the farmer to keep his best mares to breed from, and to license the stallions that are travelling. It does not matter if you don't charge them much for the licence; then it would stop these weeds. The Board would never pass these weeds to travel. I think there is no horse you can get, it does not matter where you buy him, so good as the thoroughbred horse if you can only get strength, that is the only difficulty.

12628. Just to be certain about your opinion on one other point, I gather you think that anything except of thoroughbred blood is rather detrimental?—I think there are only two breeds of horses, cart horses and thoroughbred ones.

12629. In seeking to breed hunters I want to know if you think that every strain except the thoroughbred is equally bad, do you think the introduction of the Hackney or Cleveland Bay or Yorkshire coach-horse is all equally bad?—The Hackney is the very worst blood of the lot, because any riding man that rides to hounds does not want a horse to step in the air but to go from his shoulders

12630. Are there not a considerable number of Hackneys used for riding purposes?—No riding man will ride a Hackney because he is a very uncomfortable animal to ride. He will shake you to death, and when you have ridden him a mile or two he is tumbling on his head if you don't hold him up.

Mr. SCARTH DIXON examined.

12631. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Yorkshire?—Yes, I live in York at present, but I lived for most part of my life in the north of Yorkshire.

12632. Are you breeding horses?—I have not bred any horses for the last six or seven years. I bred for several years.

12633. Are you engaged in dealing in horses in any way now?—No, I don't deal at all now. I did deal at one time and was a good deal in the horse trade, dealing in all classes of horses, but I have not done any dealing for the last eight years.

12634. Can you tell the Commission what kind of horses you bred yourself?—I bred hunters and harness horses, and of course occasionally a cart horse.

12635. Do you keep stallions of your own?—I have had an odd one or two, but the stallions I kept were either Coaching stallions or Cleveland stallions.

12636. And you keep a number of mares?—Yes, I keep just a nice few mares.

12637. What class of mares did you breed your hunters from?—Sometimes from mares I had ridden myself, and sometimes I bred one from a Cleveland mare—occasionally.

12638. What did you put them to?—A thoroughbred always. I preferred a little wide thoroughbred horse, if I was breeding from a half-bred mare, I would prefer him under 15.3 rather than over.

12639. What has been the result of your breeding hunters, say from the Cleveland Bay?—When I had the right class of Cleveland Bay I could not find any fault, if I did not get a good hunter, I got a good harness horse, but unfortunately there are so many Cleveland Bays that are not Cleveland Bays, as there are so many Hackneys that are not the old Yorkshire Hackney we used to know, and those might breed all sorts of things. But if you get a good one you can breed a good animal. I had one I rode four seasons with the York and Ainsty hounds, as good a hunter as you could get on, from a coaching mare. I have one that was by "Knight Templar," he is one of the best I ever rode.

12640. You don't object to the Cleveland Bay or the Yorkshire coach horse?—No, I don't object to them, but I should be very sorry to say that I advocate breeding from those mares and just taking the stud book record. Really the Cleveland Bay was almost bred out of knowledge when the Cleveland Bay stud book was started. I started that and tried to get the old breed back, but I found a great deal of difficulty, as owing to the foreign trade, there was a tremendous demand; you could sell horses for almost any price you liked to ask for them, and there were a lot of mares got into the book that had some bad back breeding, their produce is in the book and perhaps after two or three generations it throws back again, and the breed gets a bad name. But when I was a lad I can remember Mr. Tom Parrington, he and his brothers and friends bred some of the best hunters ever seen from Cleveland mares, old "Lady Bennett" was the second cross from a Cleveland, but the foreigner got that class of mare.

12641. Was your principal object to breed hunters?—I bred either hunter or harness horse.

12642. If it was not quite good enough for a hunter it made a valuable carriage horse?—Yes.

12643. Got about the same price for either?—No, I could get a better price for the hunter, if a hunter could carry me he was rather good to sell.

12644. And the farmers generally about you, what did they breed?—In the north of Yorkshire, they bred principally cart horses; you see the whole thing turned over when the mining was started. There was a very big demand for a short-legged powerful cart horse for mine work; there are not very many large farmers at Cleveland, and they at once jumped at this good business. If they could sell a carting gelding at from 60 to 80 guineas, it was good trade, and they started to breed on the Clydesdale line at once, I don't think there are half a dozen men in the district that are breeding light horses.

12645. Then the production of hunters went out from a purely financial cause?—Yes, the better demand was one thing, and then they lost their mares.

12646. They lost their mares on account of the great foreign demand?—Yes; they sold them to the foreigner.

12647. Was there any particular foreign demand at any particular time?—There was always a steady demand for a good sort of mare ever since I can remember; it increased very much fifteen or sixteen years ago.

12648 Are many Hackneys bred in the North?—Well, there are not so many bred in the North as in the East Riding; there are a few bred. When I say the north riding I am not quite correct: I am speaking of the Cleveland district. I don't think there are so many Hackneys bred there. Of course about Malton there are several bred; it is a very large breeding district.

12649. You hunt yourself?—Yes.

12650. Have you any practical experience of Irish horses?—Yes; I have ridden a great many Irish horses. I have one now, a very good horse. I have always liked them. I want a big blood horse to carry me; I must have some blood or I cannot get there at all.

12651. You require the blood for the stamina?—Yes.

12652. Have you ridden any half-bred Hackney

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Mr. Scarth Dixon.

horses hunting?—I have ridden one or two. I cannot say that my recollections of them are very pleasant. They have tired, they have jumped very well until they came to drains, but they are impossible over a wide drain; that is my experience. I have seen and ridden one or two; if you are on a bit of grass they might carry one for a quarter of an hour.

12653. Have you formed any opinion of the effect on horse breeding in Yorkshire generally—of their turning their attention so much to Hackneys?—I think it has been a very profitable business to a few friends of mine, but I am afraid there is a great deal of disappointment in the long run. Men who have gone on in the attempt to breed such a horse as "Rosador"—to breed a London champion—find themselves left with a great many horses that they find it difficult to get a sale for.

12654. Would you say there is a good sale for first-class pure-bred Hackneys?—I should say for show purposes and what you may call fashion for very high-class horse there is, but I don't think there is very much demand for a second-class horse, and I am afraid it is getting worse and worse from the little I have seen of the repositories. I sometimes go in and see horses sold there.

12655. You think the supply of that kind of horse is quite up to the demand?—Quite up to the demand—in fact there seems to be scarcely any demand.

12656. And you don't consider it a profitable business?—No; I don't, I am sure.

12657. Do you know Ireland at all?—I have been over two or three times; I don't really know anything of it. I have been in the Dublin show once or twice—everybody has been there, more or less—but I don't know anything of the country much. I went to see some Shire horses once that belonged to someone near Dublin, but I have not been much in Ireland.

12658. Lord Londonderry.—I gather that you believe there is nothing like a thoroughbred horse to breed from?—I think there is nothing like a thoroughbred horse. My practical experience is that if a well-bred horse cannot carry me, the other cannot. I believe with old Dick Knight that an ounce of blood is worth pounds of bone.

12659. You prefer to cross any class of mare with a thoroughbred horse?—Any class of mare to breed a light horse; I mean to say for draught work, or show work, or riding work.

12660. Do I gather from you that the Cleveland Bays are dying out?—The old strain. There are so many of them. You may have three crosses of supposed good Cleveland blood, but three crosses is only an attempted approach at purity—but the old Cleveland mare I spoke of as breeding good hunters is dying out. One mare I sold to Mr. Alfred Pease, I could trace her pedigree to 1800. She had eleven top crosses on, and when you can do that and authenticate it, it is a pretty fair record.

12661. But at the present moment they are not in the numbers?—They are not in the numbers I would wish.

12662. And that is because the small cart mares that were bred when the mines were opened have taken their place?—Yes.

12663 How were they bred?—In Cleveland they have gone entirely for the Clydesdale type; there was a sort of clean-legged cart horse, a cart mare that stood about 15.3, that would be about an outside size, not unlike that old extinct breed of the Northumberland Vardy horse, a mare that stepped a bit. From that class of mare I have seen occasionally a prepotent sire like "Perion," or "Homœopathist," sire a Leicestershire hunter, but I think that was simply an accident.

12664. Would you cross a cart mare of that stamp with a Hackney with the expectation of getting anything useful for harness or as a show mare?—No, I would not do it. I have seen one or two, and they generally had the bad properties of both parents.

12665. What would you cross them with?—As a matter of fact, I would not breed from them at all.

12666. Still, I suppose poor men who had a chance of having those mares when they had a market for them would breed from them?—I think the best thing with that class of mare is to grade them up to the heavier horse. Those mares that are in Cleveland, they have graded them up until they have a very high class of carting mare. They have all been bred from Clydesdales, ten or eleven years ago; they got up a cart horse society, and they have always got very good horses. They have got "Lord Wolseley" this year, and are steadily persevering until they get a very good class of mare in the country. I can remember when there were very few carting mares at the Cleveland shows; there was scarcely one at all.

12667. Then they have got a good class of animal by taking trouble about it?—Yes.

12668. Do you ride Irish horses when hunting?—Certainly, by preference.

12669. You have a great opinion of the Irish horses?—Yes, I have a great opinion of the Irish hunter.

12670. Do you go over to buy them yourself?—No; I have two or three friends in Ireland, men whom I can trust, and they send them over.

12671. From any particular part?—I never ask any questions, my friend knows what suits me, and sends me a horse, and I send a cheque. They are always the best of well-bred horses, he is a hard rider himself.

12672. Should you buy from the south or west of Ireland a horse as a hunter if you thought it had Hackney blood in it?—No, I should be very dubious about it. I should think when the pinch came it would give out.

12673. And you think if Hackneys got into the hunter breeding parts of the country it would stop English people buying?—I am sure it would have an injurious effect.

12674. I gather you are disappointed with Hackneys all round?—Disappointed with the Hackney cross. The very best of the Hackneys of course is a very handsome animal, you cannot help admiring him, but I should not like to ride him, they are not riding horses in fact.

12675. Except a man could breed a Hackney that would either fetch a very large sum of money, or win prizes, you don't think it is a useful animal?—I don't think so.

12676. Do you think crossed with small mountain mares they would breed a useful animal?—I don't see how they can. I don't know anything about the light mountain mares. I have seen a good deal of the Welsh ponies, and I have been about lately both in Wales and Dartmoor and Exmoor, and those places, there is a great difference of opinion as to what is the best cross, but they seem to be pretty unanimous that the Hackney did not suit. They tried the Hackney in Shropshire, at Church Stretton, and on Dartmoor.

12677. Did you see any of the results?—No, I simply heard what the ordinary breeder said. It was a mistake, they don't seem to have the hardihood necessary. The best sire in the New Forest was an Isle of Rhum pony.

12678. You are speaking of the ponies, have you had any experience of the hill pony crossed with the Hackney, as to whether that would get an aminal that could draw a trap?—No, I have no experience of the hill pony.

12679. Mr. Fitzwilliam.—If you wanted to increase a small breed, such as we are talking about, how would you go about it, by selection of a short-legged, strong, thoroughbred, or would you introduce a courser breed?—I am of opinion that if you had a nice short-legged thoroughbred horse, short of his back, and standing on a short leg, that he would improve that class of animal better than a coarser cross, he would impart a little more courage, and there is always a chance of breeding a polo pony.

12680. I presume you think he would also improve almost any breed in stamina as well as in courage?—Yes, certainly.

12681. You say you buy the horses you ride in Ireland; I suppose without even asking for the pedigree; you rather take it for granted that you are buying a really well bred animal?—I take it for granted I am buying a well bred animal, as a matter of fact one of the horses I have now I don't know his pedigree, I daresay I could get to know it, but I never asked. A gentleman bought him and he carried him very well, there is no doubt he is a well bred horse from his appearance, and the feel he gives you, and the way he spreads himself when he goes through dirt.

12682. If the Hackney was introduced into Ireland on a large scale, you would not buy with such confidence if you wanted a courageous well-bred horse?—If you take a horse in and put him at a nominal or even low fee, my experience is, that the farmers will rush to him at once regardless of consequence. I had a very curious instance that occurred just lately with respect to the way men will breed, just for an idea and without any forethought. There is a gentleman I know very well, who wanted to make one of his tenants some little acknowledgment and he gave him a hunting brood mare, she is a mare that has bred three useful 14-stone hunters that can go very well, carry a man in a good place, with the York, Bramham, or Lord Middleton's, and those countries, and the first thing the man did, he put it to a Hackney stallion, simply because he had an idea he would get something.

12683. Has she produced anything?—She has not produced anything yet; we shall look with anxiety to see what it is.

12684. Suppose you have got a soft strain into the country, how many generations do you think it would take to breed out that strain again, suppose you found it to be a failure?—It is very difficult to say, that is a very wide question, I should think a good few, I don't think you could breed it out in three or four, there is always atavism to contend with, and it goes back sometimes to a good many generations.

12685. Mr. La Touche.—You are acquainted with a good many of these farmers who breed these Hackney horses?—Oh, yes.

12686. Do you think, taking it all round, that they have found it remunerative, giving up hunter breeding and taking to harness horse breeding?—I should hardly think so with the rank and file, quite the contrary.

12687. It is only the ones who breed the very top lot?—Yes; I think they have a very good thing of it, undoubtedly.

12688. Those horses are of very considerable value, I suppose?—Oh, yes; it is simply a question of supply and demand, people will give extravagant prices for them; if five or six people want a horse there is no difficulty in getting an outrageous price for him.

12689. Would you expect to get a useful stallion for this remunerative trade for a couple of hundred pounds?—I should not like to have to buy him to send him to anyone.

12690. You have not seen any instance of the produce of an Irish mare by a Hackney stallion?—No; not that I am aware of.

12691. You have seen instances of the cross of the ordinary Yorkshire mare and the Hackney stallion?—I have seen one or two.

12692. Did you think that they crossed with favourable results?—No, they had principally loaded shoulders, not nice, light, airy action at all—more butchers' cart horses than anything else.

12693. Mr. Wrench.—Am I right in thinking that you wrote this article in the *Live Stock Journal*?—Yes.

12694. Do you adhere to what you stated here that, on examining into the pedigrees of the old Yorkshire Hackneys, they show a considerable infusion of thoroughbred blood?—Yes, certain lines of Yorkshire Hackneys.

12695. You have studied the pedigrees of Yorkshire Hackneys a good deal?—Yes; fairly well.

12696. Were they bred from a staying race?—Certainly; certain lines of them.

12697. We will take Mr. Moore's line, some of the horses in the congested districts have come from Mr. Moore's—do you consider his a good breed?—Yes.

12698. A staying line?—There is some staying blood in them, but I hold this, that if you don't continue to use your horse you will superinduce softness; I very much question now whether there is any Hackney horse that has anything like the staying power or pace of his grandfather, for instance, "Ramsdale's Performer." Forty or fifty years ago it was a common thing for the farmers of the East Riding to have trotting matches home from market with these mares, and there are records of trotting matches with the stallions; that is all done away with, and the Hackney stallion now has nothing in the world to do but just go round to the shows, and I am afraid there will be a considerable amount of softness.

12699. Do you think if they were bred up in a more natural manner and used, that would disappear?—It might disappear in generations by hard work, and resorting to something like trotting races.

12700. Do you know that there have been experiments tried with Hackney stallions in America and other places for long distances?—I look with great suspicion on American records of time.

12701. You don't think those are true?—I don't say that, but I say I look with a considerable amount of suspicion on them.

12702. With regard to those other strains, Mr. Cooke's and "Wildfire," was that a good staying blood?—Yes; "Wildfire" was a very well bred horse

12703. Did not that come from a good strain of thoroughbred blood?—That did, but you don't find very many of those horses in the stud book now.

12704. Are there not horses in the stud book with a good deal of "Wildfire" blood in them?—There are a few, certainly.

12705. Then the best Yorkshire Hackneys can trace back to some of the best thoroughbred blood?—There is no doubt about that.

12706. A horse like "Waxy"?—Yes; of course you know the Crompton Stud, through Sir Tatton Sykes' horse, a horse called "Conservator"—that goes back to all the best blood.

12706. A great many of the Hackneys bred about Sir Tatton Sykes had several crosses of thoroughbred blood?—There is no doubt about that; they continually put the thoroughbred strain on the old Yorkshire roadster, and bred back to thoroughbred blood. I am of opinion that the stud book and the stud book breeding has done harm to the Hackneys; I think people would have used more thoroughbred blood had it not been for stud book rules, and have got better horses—they would not have such extravagant action.

12707. You think that Hackneys bred on the lines of "Denmark," and "Lord Derby II.," and "Fireaway" were useful horses?—Yes, but I should not know where to find one like "Denmark" now.

12708. Do you know how the Hackneys were bred that you refer to as having ridden yourself?—I cannot remember just now; one had "Lord Derby" blood—they were Yorkshire-bred, certainly.

12709. Do you know what mares they were from?—That I cannot tell you.

12710. Do you dislike the cart blood, and Suffolk, and Clydesdale?—Oh, yes; I should object very much to the Suffolk, what I have seen of the Suffolk—I had two in my time, and they were both soft horses.

12711. Would you object to them more than to Hackneys?—I should object to the Suffolk very much indeed, as a foundation for any light horse.

12712. And Clydesdale?—As a foundation for a light horse, I think the Clydesdale is almost hopeless—no shoulders.

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12713. Do I understand you to object more or in the same degree to the Suffolk or Clydesdale, as compared with the Hackney, for hunters?—I don't think there is anything to choose among the three; I think they are all equally hopeless.

12714. You don't think the fact of the Hackney having thoroughbred blood in his back breeding is any advantage?—I don't think so; his action is sure to tire.

12715. Do you know there was a great demand for Hackneys at the late show for foreign Governments?—I heard that.

12716. When you refer to the Church Stretton ponies, are you quite certain a Hackney was tried there?—I would not be certain without my notes; I think it was either there or at Dartmoor.

12717. I suppose Mr. John Hill would be a good authority as to anything at Church Stretton?—Yes, but I would not stand on that; they tried something at Church Stretton that did not answer.

12718. Are they not very small ponies there?—Yes, 11.2 or 12 hands.

12719. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any opinion, supposing there to be a grant for improving the breed of horses in Ireland, whether it should be devoted to trying to improve the mares?—I should certainly do that, I think the mare is the more important animal of the two; I think it is utterly hopeless to expect any very great advantage to be derived from the stallion if you are breeding from a moderate class of mares—it is a very wide and difficult question to know how best to deal with. It is one I have talked over with many practical men. The Duke of Portland's scheme is, I think, a very good one in lending mares to his tenantry, but it is a very wide one and costs a good deal of money. There is one thing might be done, and it would tend to encourage horse breeding, and that is, I would give prizes for groups—foals and yearlings—by a certain sire; let three or four farmers join together, give a good prize, and let them divide it, *pro rata*, as to the number of foals they showed—that would be a better object-lesson than any show of stallions. It is a difficult thing to say from looking at a stallion what sort of sire he is going to be.

12720. At any rate, I gather you think it would be very important to do something to try and improve the mares, and to keep the good mares in the country?—That is of the very greatest importance; I am very sorry to see so many good mares going away.

The Commissioners adjourned.

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TWENTY-FOURTH DAY—THURSDAY, MARCH 11TH, 1897.

Sitting at 12 Hanover Square, London, W.

Present—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P. (in the Chair); MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P.; SIR T. H. G. ESMONDE, M.P.; SIR WALTER GILBEY; LORD RATHDONNELL; MR. F. S. WRENCH; EARL OF ENNISKILLEN; HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM; MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE; COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Mr. Wimbush.

Mr. WIMBUSH examined.

12721. CHAIRMAN.—You live in London and are in business as a horse jobber, are you not?—Yes, my lord.

12722. Do you sell horses, or only let them out?—Only let them out; we do not sell at all.

12723. Have you any objection to tell the Commission about what number of horses go through your hands in a year?—I thought I would like just to mention to your lordship that I have no objection to tell you, but, I presume, it would not go, necessarily, very much further than this room.

12724. Well, you see, the gentlemen of the press are here. I don't think it is material. I take it for granted a considerable number of horses go through you hands during the year?—Yes.

12725. Can you tell us at all what proportion of these horses you obtain from Ireland?—Yes, my lord, I can; I think, I may say, we have been buying horses in Ireland since 1871; that was the first time we went there. Of course, when we first went there, we had no connection, and, therefore, we did very little; but, by degrees it grew, and, after a few years, we came to buy nearly half our horses there—that would be about 1880. In 1883 we bought 230 horses altogether, and 101 of them were bought in Ireland; of course the number varied sometimes. I think you may take it that we have been buying nearly half our horses in Ireland; but, in the last few years, we have not been buying quite so many, for two reasons—one is, we have not required quite so many horses. There has not been quite so much demand for them, and also I have found another place where we could meet with horses—that is, in Normandy. I began to go there about ten years ago, and that has rather grown; therefore, we get a certain number from there and do not require so many from Ireland, still we get very nearly quite one-third of our horses from Ireland, and we used to get much more. We should still get more but for this other opportunity, and also not having quite the same demand for them.

12726. What class of horses do you buy?—Only first-class carriage horses; we do not buy anything else.

12727. Do you go over yourself to Ireland, or any member of your family, or how do you buy your horses?—As I say. I went, in 1871, which is a good many years ago. I then went myself, and went every month for many years to work up a connection among the farmers, and latterly I have not gone quite so much myself, but sent my son; but, up to two years ago, I have been going regularly myself.

12728. And you buy direct from the breeders generally or at fairs?—We do not buy at fairs. When I first began to go I used to attend the fairs and go among the farmers, and in those years I bought almost invariably off the farmers and occasionally in the fairs. But as time went on I made the acquaintance of men who were colt buyers, and by degrees it rather dropped into that, one or two men bought specially for me, at least I was not bound to take

their horses, but when they got a certain number together I used to go over to see them. One man I used to go to see every month; he went continually to fairs; he took the horses home, and we used to deal very largely with him; but only took what we approved; he bought with a view of selling to us, we had the first show. It has rather dropped into that that we have two or three men, large colt buyers, whom we visit periodically, and they do not sell any horses until we have seen their stock.

12729. What age do you buy them at?—Three years old in the summer, and in the spring, of course, they are coming four.

12730. I think you said you went to Ireland first in 1871?—Yes.

12731. Prior to that where did you get this class of horse?—Yorkshire; we never went further than Yorkshire or Lincolnshire.

12732. Do you buy any there now?—Yes, a few up to within the last year or two; it has got less and less, but I bought a few last year at the York Show.

12733. How do you account for Yorkshire failing to produce that class of horses?—Ever since I have been in business I noticed how the foreigners kept buying young mares. If a farmer had a good colt we should buy him; if he had a good filly the foreigners would take it. They have been doing that for the last forty years, buying every good mare, and then the introduction of Hackney stallions.

12734. You think the breeder in Yorkshire has devoted himself to another animal?—Yes; if we go to the district where we used to buy these colts we see nothing but short-tailed Hackneys.

12735. Are you particular in getting the pedigree of the horses you buy in Ireland?—Yes; I always like to know it. I always inquire if I am buying in the south; among the breeders you can always ascertain it, but sometimes these collectors who have the colt brought as a two or three-year-old have not taken much notice of it, and you don't always get it from them.

12736. How are they generally bred?—Nearly always by a thoroughbred horse.

12737. Have you in your mind any particular exceptions?—There was a very good horse called "Victor," which, stood in Kilmallock for many years, a thoroughbred, a splendid horse for getting hunters, and we had many of his stock too; he is dead now, but there is a young "Victor," called by the name of Spillane's "Victor." I suppose that was the owner; he is dead a year ago, but "Victor" is there still; he is a son of old "Victor"; there is a little stain in him. He is not in the stud book.

12738. Then the horses you buy are either by thoroughbred stallions or by stallions which are practically speaking considered to be thoroughbreds?—Certainly.

12739. What class of horses do you buy in Normandy?—Well, the horses there are not very large—15.3 or 15.2 hands, and occasionally up to 16 hands, but they are horses of a beautiful appearance, very handsome, and splendid goers.

12740. Do you know how they are bred at all?—I cannot say I do. The great thing in Normandy is for horses to trot in trotting races, and these young horses are tried before we buy them, indeed they are kept as entire horses until they see whether they are likely to make good racers, and if they cannot do six furlongs in a certain time they turn them over and have them castrated.

12741. You don't know what kind of sire?—I cannot tell, but I do not think they are thoroughbred, but those horses have breeding, as far as you can judge by their appearance, indeed that is what we find, if we get them at all strong, they do not do at all, they must show a good deal of blood.

12742. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—Find them stay?—Yes; we have no complaint in that respect, then of course they are very carefully selected and apparently very highly bred.

12743. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think there is as good a supply in Ireland as formerly of the class of carriage horses you want?—Ever since I have been there the saying always is there are no horses, and our horse is a very scarce animal and always has been, but I cannot say that I think there is very much falling off.

12744. You have to give about the same price?—Yes; we have.

12745. The price has not gone up?—It has not gone down for the best horses, I think it has for the second class horses for I know they are less expensive than they were. I must say I think, if anything, the better class are scarcer; people always tell you so.

12746. I suppose you have been over a good deal of Ireland?—I have.

12747. Where have you principally bought?—The best horses in the county Limerick and county Cork. There are no good horses except in the south; it is no use going north of the Boyne, but there are some very good horses bred in Meath, some of the most valuable and expensive horses; but Cork and Limerick, those are the good counties.

12748. I suppose you don't know the western seaboard of Ireland?—Sligo; I have been there, but it is not a good horse country.

12749. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—Did you ever buy any horses in Armagh?—I have; but then most of the horses you meet with in Armagh are bought in the south as colts, and brought up to the north and there fed very highly.

12750. CHAIRMAN.—And you think that the demand for lighter carriage horses is falling off?—What I mean rather is that we find that our old valuable customers, the nobility and so on, as they die off, the younger generation do not take horses in the same way their predecessors did. People now are more in the habit of just getting horses for the season. The old customer used to have horses all the year round, and that class of customer is rather dying out.

12751. In your buisness have you any horses, to your knowledge, with any Hackney blood in them?—I don't think so, an occasional one might be bought in Yorkshire.

12752. Do you think it is or is not suitable?—I am very dead against it.

12753. And why?—You do not get the size, colour, or body, or blood that you want.

12754. How about the action?—Well, I have heard it said that these blood horses, bred by thoroughbred horses, are deficient in action, and of course if you were to buy them wholesale without care it probably is true as a general remark, but I have bought horses in the South of Ireland by thoroughbred horses with as much action as you wish to see, and it is a very remarkable thing that you may see horses that step very high, you may put them to work (there is no greater mistake than buying for action only), and find they have no action. You may buy a beautiful Irish horse who does not appear to have much action, but by the time you have him a few years and get him seasoned you will be astonished to see him step; if they have not action and loins behind they can never really go in front with weight behind.

12755. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—As regards the action of the Hackney, do you think his legs with his action are good wearing legs?—I think I could hardly tell without seeing him, every horse differs in that respect, they may have good wearing legs, and no doubt you have to be very careful with these thoroughbred horses, they are rather apt to be deficient in that respect, not very good on their pasterns, apt to be a little defective there, and that is a very great draw back to a carriage horse.

12756. When you were in Normandy did you see any of the stallions that the horses you bought were got by?—I do not think I did, the man I went to see took me to the Government Depot, and I saw a good many of these military horses, that is some years ago,

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and I cannot say I have any recollection of what the stallions were like.

12757. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—Did you ever buy any horses by a horse called "Mackintosh" in Ireland?—Yes.

12758. He was half-bred?—Is he, I did not know. He stands at Limerick. You know the horse perhaps?

12759. I have never seen him, but I have seen his stock?—I have seen him many times, I had the impression that he was thoroughbred.

12760. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Have you ever attended any of the fairs in the North of Ireland at all?—Yes, there is a fair at Armagh and at the Moy every month, and I used to go and stay at Armagh a good deal in those days partly because one of those men, whose connection had grown up, and whom I had engaged to buy for me, lived within ten miles of Armagh, so when I used to go down to see his horses I would stay there, and I went to this fair of Moy too. But I did very little at these fairs. It is a very bad place to buy horses in, for two reasons, one is—that a good many of the horses there are bred in the North, and they are perfectly worthless from my experience of them, and the other reason is—that the men in the North, as a rule, feed their horses on turnips and potatoes and every kind of bad thing you can think of. The first thing a man does who thinks he will have a few horses is to set up a boiling machine, these horses are fearfully fat and soft, and almost certain to die on your hands.

12761. We have had some evidence given of this feeding system. I rather wanted to see whether you had found it out?—Yes, and this man who lives in the North is well aware of that, and he does not do it; he is perhaps the only man who does not.

12762. Then the class of horses that you could pick up in that part of the country chiefly come from the South, you say?—Yes, they do. In these fairs in the South which are constantly going on, you will see a contingent of men from the North, a carriage full, eighteen or twenty going there regularly and buying the young horses, and bringing them back and feeding them in the way I say; that is a very considerable trade, therefore a great many of these horses that are shown in the Moy and Armagh are horses from the South.

12763. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You say that many of these horses you buy in Normandy are 15.2 or 15.3?—Yes, and up to 16.

12764. There are plenty of horses with action got by Hackney stallions of that size?—There may be; but when I say 15.2 I mean horses with length and ends, not little short Hackneys.

12765. You get great store by blood on the sire's side?—I do.

12766. Is your objection to these Hackney horses then their conformation?—They are not the horses that we want; we want beautiful, superior, lengthy horses, such as you would put into the Royal carriages.

12767. Those are horses over 15.2 and 15.3?—Yes, but I say 15.2, from that upwards, the horses we get in Ireland and Yorkshire are generally 16 hands.

12768. I wanted to know in what way you considered the Normandy horses of 15.2 hands were superior to the Hackney horses of 15.2?—Well, when I say 15.2, for instance, when I was there this time I think we bought twenty horses there, out of those there were perhaps four or five that were only 15.2, but others were more, 15.3, 15.3½; they run more than that, but I find if we get a big one we make a mistake, if he is over 16 hands we generally find he does not do.

12769. The Normandy ones?—Yes, they become heavy and slow.

12770. You have not really got much personal experience of the Hackney horse?—No, because we do not want Hackneys.

12771. They are not good enough looking?—No, they are not carriage horses.

12772. If they are not carriage horses they don't appear to be riding horses; then you disapprove of the breed in general?—Well, we want a particular horse and the Hackney is no good to us. If we go into Yorkshire, I know the district very well, indeed, and instead of finding a beautiful carriage horse, it is a short-tailed Hackney without the tooks we want.

12773. Have you the same objection to the Cleveland Bay and the Yorkshire coaching horse stallion that you have to the Hackney stallion?—I am not quite sure that I understand you. I consider in the Yorkshire coach horse we used to get a beautiful animal that is now so scarce. It was bred from a Cleveland mare by a thoroughbred horse.

12774. I think there is an actual breed called the Yorkshire coach horse with a stud book?—Certainly, there are a good many coach horse sires in Yorkshire that are not thoroughbred.

12775. They have established themselves into a breed now that, I believe, is considered by the Yorkshire coach horse breeders to be thoroughbred. They have a stud book of their own. Do you like the Cleveland Bays?—I do not like a Cleveland Bay, sir; certainly not, but I think the Cleveland Bay is very valuable if you get crossed with sufficient thoroughbred blood as well. The Cleveland Bay is too heavy and slow by itself.

12776. A Cleveland Bay mare crossed with a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, and then the mare should not be too heavy, she should have a little blood as well. I do not think she should be pure Cleveland.

12777. In fact, you think the thoroughbred sire is the best to cross with anything?—I do, most certainly.

12778. You set great store by colour?—Yes, with other things. I would not buy a horse for his colour, but it is a great thing to have a good horse with beautiful colour.

12779. Col. ST. QUINTIN.—You say there are no horses that are any good north of the Boyne that are bred there. You have been for some years in Ireland. Was that always the case?—Of course you can understand that is a general remark. I found it by experience, and I have heard men like Daly, whom you may know, who buys for the army a good deal, I have heard him say he would never buy a horse north of the Boyne.

12780. Can you, in your own mind, give any reason for that. Is it the nature of the soil or the introduction of other blood?—Partly. The South of Ireland is nearly all grass—a delightful country for grazing horses. They can lie out all the year round with advantage, the temperature is so mild. In the North it is nearly all arable land, in little small farms, and it is very much cultivated. In addition to that, the best thoroughbred sires are in the south. They have very few sires good for much in the North.

12781. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—May I ask have you had any experience in breeding sires yourself?—No.

12782. When you buy horses, so long as they are of the shape and make you want, and sound; you are not so particular as to know how they are bred?—I always like to know, but you are quite right in the view you take. I have been told by my father that he did not like my finding out. He said, "You are apt to be prejudiced in favour of the blood. You better see the animal you want, and not mind that." But at the same time, no doubt, it is a very important thing, so I like to know how they are bred.

12783. You don't find the same difficulty now in getting horses for your business that you did, going back ten or fifteen years ago, at the time of the Franco-German War when there was a great scarcity of horses throughout the United Kingdom?—I do not know that we have found it. About what date was that?

12784. 1872. I think you said you commenced buying in 1871?—Commenced buying Irish horses in 1871. We found no difficulty, indeed. We increased our

stock very much from that date onward, because my people were still buying in Yorkshire. These horses I bought in Ireland were extra horses, and I found every year the extra number we bought were let, so we kept on going. Our stock was larger in these years than it had ever been before.

12785. Have you had any experience in Canadian or American or foreign horses generally?—Very little in Canadian. I have a great horror of American horses. I have had one or two pretty good Canadian, but I do not think it is a trade likely to do very much.

12786. You say you think very favourably of the Normandy horses?—Well, as far as my experience of them goes. Our horse is a scarce animal anywhere; you cannot go and buy them wholesale, either in Normandy or anywhere else, they require careful selection. The first year I went I bought three; they take a great deal of finding, and it is only here and there you get one.

12787. Were you inquisitive to know how they were bred in Normandy?—I did ask the question, and I generally found they were bred by some trotting racer.

12788. Are you aware that the foundation of the blood of this Normandy horse is the Norfolk Hackney?—No, I cannot say I know anything about how he is bred.

12789. Well, I have made inquiries in various parts of France where they have trotting races, and you will see at the *haras* there the pedigrees of all these horses; no difficulty in getting them; you see the very horses you speak of traced back to that; you are not aware of that?—Well, I think I once heard that they got "Norfolk Phenomenon" over there.

Sir WALTER GILBEY.—No! no!

12790. CHAIRMAN.—I think Mr. Wimbush said he did not know how they were bred?—No, except the man tells me—he mentions some French horse—I do not know how he is bred.

12791. Sir W. GILBEY.—You know nothing of the Yorkshire supply of horses previous to 1871, your experience only goes back to that date?—Oh, yes; a great deal further back than that.

12792. Up to what date back?—We will say 1854.

12793. When you bought horses at that time in Yorkshire were not many of them got by the very horse you have alluded to—"Norfolk Phenomenon"?—I do not think so, as far as I could tell.

12794. Mr. WRENCH.—Your trade, Mr. Wimbush, is rather a special one, you only go in for a big, lengthy, blood like carriage horse?—It is special in this way, we only go in for a very superior carriage horse, but not necessarily a very big one.

12795. You don't buy them much under 15.2½?—No; true enough, that is quite so, 15.2½ to 16.1 hands.

12796. And when you talk of buying from the collectors, I suppose, practically, the men you buy from are dealers?—Well, they are dealers in a certain sense; for instance, the man that I was most connected with in Ireland, I met him occasionally in the fairs, you know, and knew that he was a man who bought colts and took them home, and what he used to do when he got home. He lived near Armagh, and his neighbours used to come round next morning; he would perhaps bring twenty colts home, and say to these men, "That is for you," and "this is for you," and show what he had given for them, and they were to give him £5 more, and they did not pay him until they sold them. Then I made his acquaintance, and got him to promise to give me his colts. I used to visit him, and he would take me round to these farmers, and if I saw a horse I liked I bought him. When times became bad these farmers became broken and failed to pay this man. I told him he would lose his money, and then it came to this that I used to see his horses in Dublin before he took them to the North, and take two or three, or none, as the case might be. Afterwards he took them home, and I went there and saw fifty at a time, but he would not sell them until I saw them.

12797. You would not call him a dealer?—Well, you may. What I left he sent to Lincoln or some other fair and sold them.

12798. When you are alluding to that one man you are alluding to him as the chief man with whom you do business in the North of Ireland?—Yes.

12799. And he lives fairly close to Armagh?—Ten miles off.

12800. I daresay you remember being in some of the fairs in the South of Ireland when "Victor" was alive?—Oh, very well, indeed.

12801. If all the horses that were said to be by "Victor" were really got by him how many mares do you think he must have served in a season?—That may have been so. I know you have to be careful about that, but at the same time I knew Harris very well indeed, who owned "Victor," and I knew all these farmers, and indeed I got my information from Mr. Harris. He said "There is a 'Victor' colt so-and-so has got."

12802. But it is a fact that a large number were said to be by "Victor"?—Yes, it is extremely probable.

12803. Do you know the poor districts in Ireland, outside the district you mentioned, at all, I mean on the west coast of Ireland?—I do not know them well.

12804. Have you been in Donegal?—Yes, but not horse-buying. I have been there fishing.

12805. Have you been to Connemara and Achill?—Yes. I know Connemara very well.

12806. Fishing?—Yes.

12807. But not buying horses?—No, I never saw a colt there I would buy.

12808. You don't think the mares in that district could produce any animal that would be of use to you?—Certainly not.

12809. Can you give any opinion as to what would be the best class of animal to grade up the poor animals of that district?—It is not a subject I am supposed to know anything about, but considering the nature of the country I should imagine the most useful horse would be a sort of pony.

12810. Would you think it would be necessary that whatever horse you introduced there should be very hardy?—I certainly should.

12811. The conditions are very poor?—Very; they lie out on the bog.

12812. Mr. CAREW.—You don't think the Hackney would be suitable there?—I should think not; they want a rough sheltie there. I should think the Hackneys are delicate, but I do not know anything about them.

12813. Mr. WRENCH.—You would not say that the Hackney was not suitable from your knowledge?—If I had to give an opinion I should not go to the Hackney. I think a strong or rougher Shetland or Iceland pony would suit the people.

12814. If it had been proved that the Hackney stock were particularly hardy would you still object?—I don't know what the Hackney is good for. They want something strong to draw their carts about.

12815. Is not the Hackney a great deal stronger than the animals you have seen in their carts?—I don't know that they are, if you ask me. I am not an authority on such a subject, but I should not think so if you ask me.

12816. You don't think the Hackney is a stronger animal than the animal you saw in their carts?—No, not hardier or stronger or more suitable for their purpose.

12817. I did not say hardier, but stronger?—I should not think he is, not to draw weight.

12818. Have you any idea what size their animals are?—Those I have seen are small, thick, strong little things.

12819. What size?—I think about fifteen hands.

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12820. Do you think they are as much as that?—Perhaps most of them are less. I should think that is the outside size for them.

12821. You have no experience of the lower class of harness trade below your own trade?—No, none at all.

12822. Do you think action is a consideration in selling a small harness horse?—Oh, yes; I don't think any horse is good for carriage purposes unless he has action.

12823. But a small horse with action will sell at a very much higher price than a small horse without action?—I think he would, but it is very important that a small horse to be valuable should have a good deal of bone, and a good deal of strength.

12824. Do you dislike the cross of the Suffolk Punch or Clydesdale in your horses?—Most decidedly; I object very strongly to it. Clydesdale blood has been introduced into the North of Ireland; it is most ruinous.

12825. Do you know that there is a good deal of Clydesdale blood in the South of Ireland?—I am very sorry to hear it if it is so, it is very injurious wherever it is.

12826. Have you heard anything about American horses being brought over to Ireland?—I know some Irishmen have been over and bought some.

12827. You don't know that any horses are sold now as Irish horses that really came from America?—No; it has not come under my notice.

12828. Do you think that many of the people in your position, dealing in the class of carriage horses that you buy, have also gone to Normandy and other countries for their supplies?—People in our business—there are not very many in our business in an extensive way—but I am aware that one firm has.

12829. Gone to Normandy?—Yes.

12830. When you were attending fairs in Ireland was the proportion of good horses or bad horses the largest?—Oh, the bad ones, you might go to Mullingar fair, the streets would be crowded with horses, and it was a marvel to me whatever these horses could go to ultimately, with the greatest care and exertion, and knowing people if you got one or two it would be as much as you could do, and generally not that.

12831. Then in any expenditure of State aid do you think the people who breed the horses that you want are those to be encourged first, or the people that breed that rubbish which you see in the fair?—The people that supply the horses that we want.

12832. You would say "help the rich people"?—Not the rich. I would help the people to get rich. I would encourage the farmers to keep a pretty good mare, and then if they can breed a colt that is worth £60 or £70 at three year old, and pretty nearly £100 at four year old without any risk to them, it must be much more profitable than breeding these little wretched things that are valueless.

12833. Do you think a thoroughbred horse would be the best horse to cross with these mares?—With a good mare.

12834. I am not talking of a good mare, but of the wretched mares?—I think you cannot have anything to do with them.

12835. You would not encourage them at all?—I should not.

12836. And if they still went on breeding horses you would not give them any help?—They will get plenty without any help; there will be plenty of bad horses whatever you do.

12837. Those men who have the bad horses are probably the poorest men?—But I should imagine the object of this Society or the Government would be to get some good horses into the country.

12838. Yes, but how would you do it?—By having good thoroughbred sires; I don't know how you are to keep the good mares in the country, but you can certainly put good thoroughbred sires there, that in itself would be an immense help.

12839. And there is no other step you would recommend?—No; I have never seen my way through the subject of mares, how you are to manage those. The old hunting Irish mare is a wonderful animal; they are rather scarce now. I have seen beautiful colts from them, and though they are not all very handsome, I have no doubt they have plenty of blood; they are very strong with short legs.

12840. Your experience in buying harness horses in Ireland is that they have action enough?—Yes; if you buy none that have not, you must be very careful.

12841. That is what makes your trade comparatively small, as I understand it, about eighty or ninety horses a year?—Yes, may be so.

12842. If you could find the horses you wanted there you would prefer to buy them than in Normandy?—I don't say that.

12843. You want both?—When you get the good Irish horse there is no better horse in the world; he is very handsome and lasts, he begins to come out when other horses are going off. You may buy a Yorkshire horse and an Irish horse, both in appearance the same, and you will find when you have the Yorkshire horse two or three years his legs begin to get gummy, while your Irish horse is only beginning to come out.

12844. Do you attribute that to the soil and climate, or the way he is brought up?—Partly to that; more especially to the blood.

12845. CHAIRMAN.—I take it that your visits to the West of Ireland have been mere visits for pleasure and fishing?—Yes.

12846. And you think yourself more competent to give an opinion on the capacities of that country from a fishing than a horse breeding point of view?—Yes, I do.

12847. I take it you buy your horses wherever you can find them—Normandy, Yorkshire, Kamtschatka, or anywhere else?—Though that is so, there are only four places we go at present for them; we are open to go anywhere we can get the right animal.

12848. You mentioned Yorkshire, Ireland, and Normandy, where is the fourth place?—North of Germany.

12849. What class of action have those horses you buy in Normandy?—Very good; good all round. They can not only step well, but go most excellently on their hind legs.

12850. I understood you to say that they are bred for racing purposes?—I rather believe they are.

12851. But as to how they are bred you don't know?—No.

Mr. WITHERS examined.

Mr. Withers.

12852. CHAIRMAN.—Are you in the same class of business as Mr. Wimbush?—Yes, my lord.

12853. You have heard Mr. Wimbush's evidence?—I have.

12854. I was going to ask you whether you generally agree with that?—Yes, I generally agree with Mr. Wimbush, but if you ask me as to a point or two. In the first place we don't buy so many horses in Ireland. Different businesses have different practices; they buy horses, as he has told you, at three years old, and our practice always has been to buy them at four, and we find practically that by the time the Irish horses get to be four years old they are gone either to Mr. Wimbush or someone who has bought them at three years old, and turned them away in their own particular line of business.

12855. Where do you get your horses mostly?—We get about a quarter from Ireland; we replace about a quarter—we replace in our business as nearly as possible 200 horses a year. I am speaking now not of the hunter trade, because we buy hunters as well, and those are almost all bought in Ireland.

12856. I will ask you a question or two about that afterwards?—We replace about 200 horses a year in our stock—that is, in the ordinary course of things 200 horses get either worn out or incurably lame or meet with accidents, and we buy about 200 and sell about 200. The 200 horses sold go to Aldridge's, and are sold as horses without any warranty or any reserve. We don't sell carriage horses privately; there may be an exceptional case where a customer says, "I want to buy that horse," then we put a good, fair price upon him, and get it.

12857. Of those 200 horses you get about a quarter from Ireland?—About a quarter.

12858. Where do you get the three-quarters?—At English fairs—York, Horncastle, Lincoln (that is a large fair), and other English fairs.

12859. Do you require a pedigree, or do you know how those horses are bred that you buy?—Whenever I buy a horse I say "How is he bred?" and I make a note of it at the time; but you cannot always get correct pedigrees about horses—people don't know them—unless you buy them from some English farmer who has bred the horse himself. I had a hard week's travel the week before last, for instance. I went from London to Hanover, where I bought six horses; from there I went to Brussels, and did not buy anything. From Brussels I went to Ghent, where there is a very large dealer—one of the largest dealers in the world—named Schmidt, and I bought four horses of him—one a French horse (which was the best horse I bought all through my journey) and three American horses. That man has a buyer in Chicago, and he gets consignments of American horses; he is very fond of American horses. I bought three Americans, and I am quite satisfied now that they have come home and the French horse. From there I went to Lille, where there is a very large dealer, named De Longueville. I did not buy anything there. I went to Paris and spent a day there, where I saw a large quantity of Norman horses. I bought two horses—one a French horse and the other an American horse.

12860. A great number of American horses find their way there?—In Paris I saw a great number of Irish horses—at Lille I saw several Irish horses; at Ghent I did not see any.

12861. Do you know at all as a matter of fact how most of the horses you buy in England are bred?—They are supposed to be—they are as a rule by English thoroughbred horses.

12862. Have you any preference; would you prefer to buy a horse by a thoroughbred to a horse by any other sire?—No, I don't know that I would. I belong to the Hunter Improvement Society, and we are very particular about our thoroughbred horses, but if it is a well-bred English horse I would not say I would prefer them then, there are so many good horses in England that are covering that are not quite thoroughbred horses.

12863. How about the Hackneys?—I have had no experience of them. I saw some very beautiful Hackney horses at the show last week, and I admired them very much; but as to their working capabilities I know nothing, and I am not aware that I have ever had in my stock a horse that has had Hackney blood in him. If I saw a horse that was my type of horse—a Hackney is sure to be a good goer—but if it was my type of horse, if a man told me it had Hackney blood, and I thought his courage was good and his other points were in my favour, I should not hesitate though he had got Hackney blood, but at the same time I have no experience of them. I have never seen a Hackney horse that was quite what we call a London carriage hore.

12864. You sell hunters too?—Yes.

12865. Do you let them out or sell them?—Sell them.

12866. Is that a large branch of your business?—Yes; I should think my brother has brought from Ireland 160 last year, all bought in Ireland at the Dublin Show and other places.

12867. Do you buy all your hunters in Ireland?—Yes; that is the number of Irish hunters we buy.

12868. You buy them elsewhere?—Yes, a few elsewhere, but not many.

12869. Principally in Ireland?—We always think that is the home for hunters.

12870. What age do you buy them?—Four, five, and six if the horse has a good character.

12871. Direct from the breeders?—No, we buy them at the Dublin Show, perhaps get a few direct from the breeders; but as a rule they are bought from dealers who have bought them from the farmers.

12872. Does your brother go over himself, or do you go over?—My brother always goes; I don't know much of Ireland.

12873. Where does he buy them do you know?—From Widger of Waterford; you would know him by name.

12874. In the South of Ireland?—Yes.

12875. Have you ever bought in the North?—I think not.

12876. Do you consider Ireland produces a rather superior hunter?—Oh, yes.

12877. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You seem to think that the Hackney would not be likely to breed the type of carriage horse you require?—Well, I think not, if like produces like, and it is supposed to. I should not be at all sorry to see some one try the experiment, but I have had no experience.

12878. You don't want to try it yourself?—I don't want to try it myself. Before you get a horse to our type, breeding him myself, I think I should have to go through a good deal of experience; I am not saying it is not there, but if like produces like then a Hackney is not the horse for my business much as I admire them and their action.

12879. Do you think that the Irish hunter as he is at present is the best in the world?—I think so, that is my opinion. I have been what is called a hunting man more or less all my life, and that is my experience.

12880. If you think that, I suppose you also think that the introduction of any new blood into that breed would be risky?—Oh, certainly, a risk, but I am not going to say it would be a failure.

12881. But it would be a risk?—I think so, as it would be in changing any type of horse.

12882. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—You say that because you have no experience of what work a Hackney can do?—I have no experience.

12883. Therefore it is merely surmise?—No; I am not quite sure of that. I only say that I would not like to try the risk.

12884. You would leave well alone?—It may be some risk to arrive at my purpose. I have only my business in view.

12885. But with regard to the Hackney, you have no experience, and therefore it is only your opinion?—I have no experience.

12886. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Why do you dislike the Hackney type of horse?—I am only saying that I dislike him for my business; he is not what I call a London carriage horse, and I have always in my mind what is the London carriage horse.

12887. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said you very much admired the horse?—Very much admired the Hackney as I have seen them at shows.

12888. Lord RATHDONNELL.—I understood you to say you did not like the type?—Not for my business.

12889. Then you admire his type?—Very much as a horse. I saw some beautiful horses the other day at the show, but I did not admire them so much as the thoroughbred horses that were there at the

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beginning of this week. I like the thoroughbred horse because he has brought grist to my mill by breeding good carriage horses and good hunters.

12890. What do you think the Hackney then is fit for by his type?—For harness purposes.

12891. Altogether?—I have no experience of their riding.

12892. Did you ever attend any fairs in Ireland?—Yes, I was at a fair once in Limerick, but my brother goes to Ireland and goes to the different fairs, and he always attends the Dublin Show, and knows a great number of people in Ireland.

12893. You have no experience of the fairs?—No.

12894. Mr. La Touche.—Have you much experience of the working of the Hunters' Improvement Society, Mr. Withers?—I have not had very much experience. The Society is an improving one of its kind, and more members are coming in. It receives a greater amount of support than ever it did. A greater number of members have joined this last year than I think ever attended in one single year, and I think if it did not give satisfaction in the country—the working of it—that it would not have been the success it has.

12895. I gather that one of the parts of the scheme is that they subsidise thirty-two stallions that are allocated to districts in England, and they subsidise them to the extent of £150 a year?—Yes.

12896. Do you think that is sufficient inducement to hold out to a man to permit his horse to cover mares at £2 a mare?—I should rather give them, if it could be done, I should give them another £50 each, and make it £200 instead of £150.

12897. You think you would get a better class of stallion?—I think you would; I think it would be a greater inducement to a man.

12898. Have you formed any idea of a feasible plan for keeping mares in the country?—No, sir; my first fair was forty years ago, and that was when I was sixteen years of age and I said to my father, "Who are these funny-looking men who are at the fair here?" He said "They are foreigners; they have been coming here now for a long time." He said, "You will find that where an Englishman will give £50 for a mare—if he can get hold of a good one—the foreigner will give £60," and, as far as my experience has gone, that has been practically going on ever since, and a great number of foreigners come here.

12899. You consider that, possibly, the best way of improving the breed of horses is to try and improve the stallions as much as possible, and to put good stallions within the reach of the farmers?—As much as possible; and as a rule the foreigner buys the best mare; he does not buy the worst ones. They have the money, and only want to find the mares, and are quite ready to give money for them.

12900. It would be very difficult to induce the farmer to keep his best mare?—Yes; it has been said by a great number of people, "While the foreigners come, all the better; they disseminate money in this country." There are different ways of looking at it. I know they spend an enormous lot of money in Ireland in mares. In two of the places I went to the week before last, one man's son was in Ireland and the other man's partner was in England.

12901. Sir W. Gilbey.—Your purchases in Ireland are principally for hunters, are they not?—Yes.

12902. You said one-fourth came from Ireland?—About one-fourth for carriage horses; but all our hunters—with two or three exceptions—are bought in Ireland, and they have been bought by my brother.

12903. I think you said 200 horses you purchased in the year, and about one-fourth from Ireland?—Yes.

12904. One-quarter of carriage horses or hunters?—Carriage horses only.

12905. You have remarked your appreciation of the Hackney horse. Have you seen any animals bred by the Hackney out of a thoroughbred mare or hunter mare—barouche horses?—I don't think I have, Sir Walter. I don't depreciate the Hackney, because I know nothing about them. I like the Hackneys from their action and their type, but that does not happen to be my type for a hunter or carriage horse.

12906. My question was whether you had seen any animals bred by the Hackney out of a thoroughbred mare or a hunter mare?—I have not; it has not come across me.

12907. Sir Thomas Esmonde.—What would your definition be of a first-class carriage horse?—Well, a first-class carriage horse should be a well-bred horse, with a good head and neck, and good shoulders—not such good shoulders, perhaps, as you want for a saddle, but with good back and loins, and shall fill the harness well.

12908. Are many horses of that description bought in London from Ireland, speaking generally?—No; I think not. The Irish horses that find their way to London are either bought by people in my own business or by dealers who buy them in Ireland and bring them over here; that is the only way carriage horses come here to be sold.

12909. Then you said there were not very many of them bought from Ireland—not very many Irish horses—is that what you mean?—That are sold in London.

12910. You mean there are not very many first-class carriage horses imported from Ireland to England?—They are imported, but they don't find their way to be sold in London. They are brought over by Irish dealers who take them to fairs. You cannot go to an English fair without seeing Irish horses, unless it is in some very remote district.

12911. What class of horse do you think the most likely to be a good carriage horse, must he have a good deal of blood in him?—Yes; blood and substance. Of course, as a job master, I have to horse different carriages, and if I bought them all one type of carriage horse I should only have a certain number of customers for that particular horse; you must buy your horses 15.3 to 16.3 or 17 hands, but as a rule they are bought of one type.

12912. And generally a large-sized horse?—Generally a large-sized horse.

12913. Sir W. Gilbey.—Going back some ten or twelve years, there was a great scarcity in the United Kingdom for your purpose after the Franco-German war, going up to eight or ten years ago; there is not the difficulty now to get the horses you want that you had then?—There is not the difficulty now to buy the horse that there was ten or twelve years ago.

12914. That was previous to the societies that you know are in existence now being established?—Yes!

12915. And at that date back you were obliged to go abroad mostly for your horses, to America and Canada, were you not?—We went abroad a great deal, and for four or five years we had one buyer in Lexington, and the other buyer in New York, and we used to get a good many horses from there, but partly because the supply is better in England and partly because the supply is not so good there—and they are quite as dear there as they are here—we have dropped off buying so many American horses as we did.

12916. And although there is a decrease in the number you buy now in Ireland, you could not get the same number of horses from Ireland at that date I presume?—I don't think it has varied so much.

12917. But you could not get them in Yorkshire or England?—No; we used to say that if we had had at that time to have kept our customers supplied with English horses we could not have supplied them with English horses; we went to the best market we could—to America.

12918. You will look forward—I hope you will do so—to, in future being able to buy your horses in the United Kingdom instead of going to Austria or

Hungary?—We don't want to go to America or to go abroad if we could only buy them in England or Ireland, but American horses at that time were very dear. I remember buying ten horses that just came off the boat at Liverpool, and gave £110 a-piece for them. I bought ten American horses once at Lille in France, from a man who had gone over to America and gave us the first refusal after he returned—they cost £110 a-piece.

12919. Was there any pedigree with those horses; do you know how they were bred?—No; you could could not tell.

12920. As long as they suit you you are not so particular to know how they are bred?—No, we would rather know the breeding if we could.

12921. Mr. CAREW.—What did you buy these for that cost you £110 a-piece?—Carriage horses.

12922. Did they turn out well?—Yes; the record of our books show it was a very good purchase, the ten at Liverpool and the ten in France.

12923. Mr. WRENCH.—Have you any experience of breeding horses?—So far as our experience of breeding horses it has been rather disastrous, because it has been from favourite mares that have been in the stock, we use very few mares in our business; but my brother said: "Well, there is old Daisy there, let us breed from her before she has got very old," and two or three other mares we breed from like that, but we have been unfortunate with them, and two or three hunting mares I have ridden myself that I bred from. I am one of the unfortunate people in breeding, and so I have given it up.

12924. What class of sires did you use?—Thoroughbred horses for the hunters, and our carriage horses were generally by one of the Mr. Burdett-Coutts'; I forget the names of the horses.

12925. But they did not turn out well?—They did not turn out well because we had not got proper accommodation for them; ours was not a breeding establishment.

12926. You have been abroad a good deal buying horses?—Not a great deal.

12927. Have you been abroad to more than the places you mentioned; did you buy from Mr. Opperheimer?—I bought these six from Mr. Opperheimer, but they were not German horses.

12928. He has a very large establishment?—Yes.

12929. And knows the horse trade of the world?—Well, Dorman of New York used to be the largest dealer in the world, but he does not sell so many now; then came De Longueville of Lille, and next was Opperheimer; now I think things have changed and Opperheimer may be considered the greatest dealer in the world.

12930. And he buys his horses all over the world?—Yes, from Russia.

12931. Russian horses are very good indeed, are they not?—Yes, they are.

12932. Have you ever heard when you have been abroad how the French Government breed their horses?—No, I have not; I should like very much to go to some of their breeding establishments; I have either not had the time or not come across them.

12933. You don't know that they breed a good many artillery and cavalry horses from Hackneys?—I do not.

12934. Do you know whether there was a considerable sale of good Hackney stallions at the show last week?—I did not hear that.

12935. You were not buying any yourself?—No.

12936. Do you dislike the blood of the Suffolk Punch or the Clydesdale in your horses?—I am very fond of a good Norfolk horse or a good Suffolk horse if I think he is a good one; it is not quite the type of the Suffolk Punch, because the Suffolk Punch is a horse with more crest, there are many good horses bred in Norfolk.

12937. But I am talking of the Suffolk Punch, the big chestnut cart-horse, do you like the blood of that in your horses?—Oh, no.

12938. Do you like the blood of the Clydesdale?—No, I have not had much experience of the Clydesdale horse, but I don't like the blood.

12939. But if you were buying horses would you prefer that they should have a strain of Hackney blood in them to a strain of cart-horse blood for your purposes?—For my purposes I should say yes, but I have no experience of them from what I have seen of the two types.

12940. When you come to a lower class of harness horses than you buy; do you think the Hackney sire would be a suitable horse to produce those horses?—Well, I should very much like to see the outcome of some breeding before I ventured an opinion on that.

12941. Do you think the Hackney horse would get action?—Yes; and my own opinion would be that Hackney blood in horses not quite of the carriage type, but horses for ordinary purposes, would not be undesirable, but I could not speak without experience.

12942. And in the lower class of harness horses is action of great importance?—If you get a horse with action he sells for a good deal more money.

12943. I mean merely as a matter of £ *s. d.*?—As a matter of £ *s. d.* action is most desirable.

12944. Is it the thing that perhaps tells most when you come to deal with the lower class of harness horses?—Yes, certainly.

12945. I think you said you were a member of the Hunter Improvement Society?—Yes.

12946. Can you notice at all whether there has been any improvement in the breeding of hunters in England since the introduction of the Society?—Yes. I wish I had my records in my own mind, from time to time, seeing how is that horse bred and this horse, looking at the hunter and the registered mares; I hear accounts of them, but I don't go to farm-houses as a rule.

12947. But you think it has done good?—I think so; there was a great crowd of persons at the Hall yesterday, where I was acting as referee judge. A great number of farmers and people were there, they come there pretty regularly, and I don't think they would continue if it was not a success.

12948. Would you approve of subsidising half-bred stallions bred on not quite such exclusive terms as the half-bred stallions you admit?—No, I would go for the thoroughbred horse first, but there are a certain breed of horses that are called registered hunter sires.

12949. Under what conditions?—Under our conditions, but then they have to have certain pedigrees.

12950. But would you relax those conditions at all?—Well, do you know I think I would, for my purpose of horse.

12951. To what degree?—Well, there are many horses that don't get quite near the registered hunter sire, which in my opinion would be as good for my purpose.

12952. Would you require any certain number of crosses of thoroughbred blood in such sires?—I would not for my purpose, but for the Hunter Improvement Society they are very jealous of blood.

12953. But for your purpose you would let in a lower class of horses?—For my purpose I would.

12954. CHAIRMAN.—In what you say about the hunter sires, are you referring to Ireland or England or both?—I am referring to both.

12955. The remarks you make are equally applicable to both countries?—Quite.

12956. In your business do you deal at all in what has been called the lower class of harness horses?—No; we find that our horses, bought as good as they can be, get somehow with wear into our lower class; our endeavour is to keep the standard up as much as possible.

12957. I wanted to ask you whether, in the opinion you have given the Commission in reference to the lower class of harness horses, those are opinions that have been derived from experience in your business?

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—From what I have seen other horses do, and the trade I have seen done with the lower class of horses.

12958. In that you have had no practical experience?—No practical experience. I never dealt in them.

12959. Can you tell us at all whether the supply of hunters in Ireland is falling off or increasing?—Well, I am not quite certain about the number. I should like to have looked up the number of horses that were exported from Ireland now and had been. I believe it is on record somewhere.

12960. I was asking you rather from your own experience as a buyer?—You can always go and buy your hunters, but a first class horse is a very difficult thing to meet with, and always commands a great deal of money in Ireland.

12961. But do you think there is as good a supply now as there was ten or fifteen or twenty years ago?—I think so.

12962. And you think the quality is as good?—I can only find very few. You see some beautiful horses come here from Ireland, and you wonder where they come from, I mean that are bought by English dealers, Stokes of Market Harborough and other dealers. They are got as a rule from people like Mr. Widger, Mr. Morton of Ballymena, and other large buyers, who buy them from farmers and make them and then they are ready for the English market.

12963. Then I take it that in your opinion there has been no marked change in Ireland as regards the quantity or the quality of the horses you buy for hunting purposes?—I think not.

12964. Would that apply also to the horses you buy in Ireland for carriage purposes?—My opinion about carriage horses is that we don't get quite as good horses as we used to, that is my firm opinion about carriage horses.

12965. Can you account for that?—No, I cannot account for it, it has not come within my province.

12966. I suppose motor cars and bicycles do not affect your trade at all?—I am not sure that they have not. Persons that used to get three horses now only get two. For instance, a lady said to our manager the other day, "We shall only take two horses into the country this time because my daughters ride bicycles and go out to tea parties ten or twelve miles, and we will only take two horses instead of three.

12967. Can you form any opinion as to the practical steps to be taken in Ireland for the improvement of horse-breeding as an industry, thought about it all all?—Yes, I have thought about it in this way, as Mr. Wimbush said just now we see a lot of bad horses in Ireland and the way to improve the breed is to keep better mares in the country. I don't think the fault is in the thoroughbred horse, it is the mares. The foreigners have taken them away from Ireland in the same way that they have taken them from England. A great number of horses go from the Dublin Show abroad.

Mr. HAMES examined.

Mr. Hames.

12968. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Leicester?—Yes, my lord.

12969. And are engaged in horse dealing?—Yes.

12970. What classes of horses?—Nearly all of them hunters.

12971. Where do you buy your horses?—Nearly all of them in Ireland.

12972. Do you buy them yourself?—Not for the last few years. I have a man who lives in Ireland all the time.

12973. The whole year round? Does he buy for you from the farmers generally?—Yes, as far as possible I like to save the intermediate profit between the dealer.

12974. How long have you been buying horses in Ireland?—Well, since I first commenced—1873, but my father and brother bought a few before then, but nothing like so many. I remember going to Ballinasloe fair—I can't tell you quite what year, but it would be two or three years before then.

12975. And previous to that do you know where your hunting horses were bought—what part of England?—Our business was nothing like so large, but my father had always a very great liking for the Irish horses, and he always bought them at our fairs. A very much better class of horses came to our fairs then than now.

12976. To English fairs?—Yes.

12977. As to Ireland, do you think the horses have improved in your experience or deteriorated— I mean the class of horse you buy?—Well, I think the class is very much the same, but I think it is far more scarce. I think that is because of the consumption, not because of the production.

12978. The demand is larger?—Certainly.

12979. And the supply, perhaps, about the same?—Yes, of course, the really good horse is so very difficult to meet with, but I think that is more because so many people go to Ireland, knowing what very good horses there are there.

12980. Then, I take it, in your opinion the supply has not kept up to the demand—that is to say, the demand for a larger number of these good, high class hunters is greater than can be easily met with by the supply?—Yes. I could sell a great many more if I could only find them. The difficulty is in finding them.

12981. There is no likelihood, in your opinion, that if the supply was considerably increased the price would fall very much?—No, I don't think so.

12982. I suppose you buy some hunters in England?—Very few, but I am very prejudiced, and those which I do buy, if you could trace them, are originally Irish horses. There are very few English horses bred.

12983. Are you particular about ascertaining the breeding of what you buy in Ireland?—As far as I can possibly. I never give a pedigree unless, really, I buy from the farmer. You know you can trace the strain if you buy three or four horses by one sire. You can always trace the strain if the horse is predisposed to a curly hock. A great many of the stock will show it.

12984. How are the horses—by thoroughbreds?—Yes. I mean the thoroughbred ones are the good ones, but still there are some very good horses that have a stain in them. There was a very good sire, "Delight," who, perhaps, got as many good horses as any hunter I ever remember, and I believe he was not quite thoroughbred. You might remember "MacIntosh." I don't believe he was quite thoroughbred, but I would always buy a horse by him, and I think "Mayboy" was much the same. I had as good a horse by him as a hunter as any horse I ever rode.

Lord ENNISKILLEN.—"Mayboy" is almost thoroughbred, the same as "New Oswestry."

12985. CHAIRMAN.—Do you know anything about the Royal Dublin Society's scheme?—No.

12986. Do you think the introduction of Hackney blood would be beneficial in any way in the production of the class of hunters you require?—I think it would be very ruinous.

12987. You would not approve of it?—By no means. No worse thing could possibly happen.

12988. Do you equally disapprove of the strain of the Cleveland Bay or the old Yorkshire coaching horse?—Of the two I most certainly would rather have that. The weight-carrying horse, especially in Yorkshire, in days gone by had a strain of this light-legged cart horse.

12989. You do a certain amount of business in harness horses?—Yes, but more particularly of the hunting pattern. I never buy a real typical harness horse. I don't like them. They are not the sort I am able to sell. I always like a hunting harness horse.

12990. At what age do you buy these hunters in Ireland?—I like to buy five-year-olds, but I have to buy a great number at four, and I keep them out in Ireland. I never miss a good four-year-old.

12991. If you buy them as four-year-olds do you keep them in Ireland?—Yes, a great number. I leave them with two or three farmers—one in Kildare, another in Meath. Then my own buyer is a capital horseman, and he has stabling for about sixteen, and he rides them, and he has an opportunity to go to different hunts, and then he is able to buy a horse that he sees going and knows it is a horse of some character. When they become fit then I have them over.

12992. Do you know whether he buys any in the North of Ireland?—None, very rarely. If it is there it is only a very very rare exception. They are all southern bred horses. I believe there are a few good horses bred in the North, but very few.

12993. Then we may take it from you that you think that the South of Ireland has in some way attained a certain amount of pre-emnience in producing hunters?—Most certainly.

12994. To what do you attribute that?—First of all, I think the blood you get, there are no horses so purely bred as hunting horses, and then I should think whether it is the subsoil or not I don't know, but they are able to mature them as young ones with greater bone. Then I think whether they are trained from their youth to jump or not I don't know, but I often said that if I bred a really good English horse I would send him to Ireland to be schooled, because they jump as many as twenty fences there to one in England, they seem able to use their feet more quickly.

12995. Mr. Fitzwilliam. — I gather from your evidence that you require a highly courageous and highly bred horse?—Yes, they are no use without that.

12996. And you consider that the thoroughbred blood is the blood which produces that?—Most undoubtedly.

12997. And therefore you would be averse to the introduction of any blood which did not produce it in the same degree?—Most certainly.

12998. Do you think that if any other breed which did not produce this highly courageous and blood-like animal was introduced it would damage the prestige of the present Irish breed?—Oh! very much.

12999. And, in that way, I presume it would damage the farmer himself?—Yes, I think it would be the most ruinous thing that could happen to Ireland in my opinion.

13000. Lord Enniskillen. — Have you been in the West?—Yes, I have been down to Galway.

13001. Ever buy any horses there?—I bought some, but they are not West of Ireland horses; I have not bought them further than Roscommon.

13002. But they are Roscommon horses?—Yes.

13003. You never noticed the class of horses in the West, in the poorer districts?—No.

13004. You have never been to Donegal?—No.

13005. Therefore you have no idea of the class of mare they have got, or what would be the best animal for them?—No.

13006. Your experience is in the horse-breeding districts—in the hunting districts?—Yes; more particularly.

13007. Lord Rathdonnell.—It has been said that the horses in the fairs in Ireland have rather deteriorated. Can you give any cause for that?—No, only that if there is a good horse 200 miles from Dublin, my man journeys down the whole way to go and see it, and in days gone by I suppose the travelling was very much worse, and one had to wait until you went to Ballinasloe fair or wherever the fair would be.

13008. You think that you yourself are not the only man doing; that same thing?—Oh! there are several others; wherever there is a good horse, a journey is of no importance to go and look at it.

13009. We may take it that all the sound animals are bought up before ever arriving at any fair?—Most certainly.

13010. And the breeders take unsound, unsaleable animals into the fair and try to get rid of them?—Yes.

13011. I think you said that no matter how many good horses are bred in Ireland of the right sort, there would be just as good a demand for them as at the present time?—I don't think you could produce a supply sufficient for the demand.

13012. Had the supply increased, the demand would?—Most certainly.

13013. Mr. La Touche.—Have you ever been in the North of Ireland?—Yes.

13014. At Moy fair?—I have never been to Moy fair.

13015. Do you know any reason why there should not be as good horses in the North as in the South?—No, I don't; except that I think there is a very great deal to do with this peculiar subsoil—horses are matured better on certain parts; I don't think it runs through the North quite as much.

13016. Have you ever seen a good hunter from the North?—There have been some thoroughbred stallions in the North, Lord Rossmore has some, and Hutton, of Carrickfergus. I don't think they have the opportunities of making them, but I have had one or two well-bred horses from that part that were bred in the North.

13017. If the farmers in the North were to devote their attention to breeding horses like the farmers in the South from thoroughbred horses, do you think they could do it?—I don't see why they should not, but I don't think they would have the opportunity of making them—to finish them off.

13018. Do you think the horsebreeding in the South is more profitable to the breeder than the show horse in the North?—Yes; most certainly.

13019. Sir Walter Gilbey.—You were at the last Dublin Show. In the middle-weight hunters you bought the first prize horse?—Yes.

13020. He was bred in the North?—Yes.

13021. You don't buy barouche or park carriage horses?—No.

13022. Then your trade is exclusively with hunters?—Very nearly; entirely for hunters.

13023. Colonel St. Quintin.—Did you ever buy any horses formerly out of Yorkshire or Lincolnshire?—A few.

13024. Can you get them now?—No.

13025. Why?—I think the farmers don't breed them; they have lost their mares; I don't think they have the money to keep the mares to breed from.

13026. Is there the same class of horses bred in a way in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire that were formerly bred there?—I don't think there are. I don't think you can buy as good a horse now.

13027. In former days, as far as report goes, there was no part of the United Kingdom that produced better class hunters and high-class harness horses than Yorkshire and Lincolnshire?—They had a very great reputation, I know, and in Holderness particularly.

13028. Chairman.—But you have never bought much there?—No, I have always found the Irish horse with a little condition, and so on, has always improved and grown the right way. I have always ascribed that simply to the good blood. If you buy a Yorkshire horse they are exceptionally well-bred horses, but as a rule they generally grow commoner. You will see a horse in Yorkshire that shows an immense amount of quality, and you would say he would be a very fast horse and would gallop up—a useful animal well put together; yet you would find the Irish horse would be galloping on and would go the

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best and suit far better than this very good-looking Yorkshire horse. I mean, from appearances; one would look comparatively a racehorse, and the other a very useful animal; a half-bred sort of a horse. But compare the two and the one is a much faster horse than the other, and a very much better stayer.

13029. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—You say there is a difficulty in getting the number of hunters from Ireland now that you used to get formerly?—Yes, I think there is a far greater difficulty now, but that is not because of the supply, but I think because more people have found out the goodness of the Irish horse, and so the people go there.

13030. There is a greater demand for them, that is the real reason?—Yes.

13031. And there is no difficulty in finding good horses any more than there was before as far as the numbers of them went; but that the demand is greater now than it was?—I should be inclined to think that that is the reason.

13032. You have no idea, even approximately, what would be the number of Irish horses imported into your country every year—I mean Irish hunters?—I could not say that. I know how many I have imported during the last four or five years. I thought I would just look it up.

13033. Could you give the figures?—For the last five years the smallest number was 233 in one year, not quite the 300.

13034. Your average would be about 250 every year?—Yes.

13035. Mr. CAREW.—You include in the South of Ireland Meath and Kildare?—Yes, most certainly.

13036. Have you ever been to the West, to Ballina, to buy?—Never.

13037. Or in Kerry?—Never.

13038. You have never bought any horses that were bred in the West or in Kerry?—I bought one horse that I shall for ever remember, that came from Ballina. He was one of the most expensive and the worst animals I ever did buy. I bought him from a very clever gentleman, I remember. I can remember the transaction quite well. I had better not mention his name.

13039. How was he bred?—I have forgotten. I know there was a very good horse stood there, by name Rover, that got some very good stock. I had perhaps one good horse, and perhaps I may put down to it that he got very good stock.

13040. You give very high prices for your hunters?—Well, I try to buy them as well as I can, but I never leave a good one for the money.

13041. You have men all over the country to select for you from the farmers and keep them?—One becomes pretty well known. We have certain men in neighbourhoods whom we have to give something to when we purchase a horse. They write to my man and tell him, and of course he is well known, and of anybody who has a good horse we are only too glad to secure the refusal, and they are generally too pleased to sell because it is a very ready quick transaction, and we don't give a very great deal of trouble if they have only got a good sound horse.

13042. What do you consider the breed of horse that makes the best harness horse?—Oh, a thoroughbred one, most certainly. If you had to drive one, I think you would agree with me.

13043. Mr. WRENCH.—Practically you haven't been into the impoverished districts in Ireland at all?—No.

13044. Westport?—No.

13045. Or Donegal at all?—No.

13046. You don't know the general horse trade of the country; you don't know whether there is a trade outside the hunter trade?—No, I do not, I have no experience of that.

13047. Lord Dunraven asked you if you would approve of Hackney blood being introduced to improve the class of horse you buy, and you said distinctly not. Have you ever heard of any such suggestion. Have you ever heard it suggested that Hackney blood should be introduced into Ireland to improve high class hunters?—I don't think I did.

13048. Nor have I. I thought from your answer that you had. Do you think the conditions of Ireland, soil and climate, and the number of fences, and the natural way in which the horses are brought up has anything to say to the goodness of Irish horses?—Certainly; but I think that the breeding is the main thing. It would not matter about all the other things, unless you had the right blood to begin with, I think all the other attributes would be lost.

13049. You think it is possible to be fairly certain of the pedigree of the horses you buy from the farmers?—I do.

13050. Therefore if there was any blood to which you objected you would be able to find it out?—I should, if there was a Hackney, most certainly.

13051. You think there is no difficulty about that?—No; I think they are very marked.

13052. If a horse had Hackney blood you would be able to detect it?—I think I could, of course; but most certainly if he was sired by a Hackney, I don't think there would be any difficulty in anybody being able to say there is Hackney blood.

13053. Do you object to cart-horse blood, or Clydesdale blood or Suffolk Punch?—I do; but I don't say Suffolk Punch; I know nothing about it. But I would rather have Clydesdale blood than Hackney blood.

13054. Why?—To begin with, it is almost an impossibility to get a Hackney with anything like riding shoulders, and I think they would hand it down more quickly. Then they can only go at one end, and that is the worst end for a hunter.

13055. But when you talk of riding shoulders, do you mean slope or length, or what do you mean?—Heaviness of the points of the shoulders. If you were only to ride one once you would not require any exemplifying of what I mean.

13056. Have you often ridden Hackneys?—I can't say I did; but I have seen them ridden and understand what the movements are like.

13057. You don't speak from experience?—No.

13058. You judge from what you have seen in shows?—Yes.

13059. You haven't bred Hackneys?—No.

13060. CHAIRMAN.—I don't think that the question I asked just now was quite accurately repeated. I put it in a different shape. I asked you whether you think the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland is likely to prove beneficial or the reverse to the hunters?—I should say it would certainly be unbeneficial.

13061. I will simplify that. Do you think it would be possible to confine the Hackney blood to any part of Ireland, and if there are a number of Hackney stallions in the congested districts would you think it probable that the strain would gradually spread about through the country?—I am afraid it would.

13062. You would not object to the Hackney if its blood could be kept away from the part of the country best calculated to breed hunters?—I think it would be a very great mistake to introduce it into the country at all.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER examined.

13063. CHAIRMAN. — You are interested in polo ponies?—Yes.

13064. Do you breed them?—I am trying to breed a few now, but they are not old enough to know very much about them yet. The eldest is three years old.

13065. Where are you breeding them?—In Ireland.

13066. In what part of the country?—In Wexford.

13067. And what stallions and what mares have you used?—I am using a stallion I bought at the Yardley stud sale, a thoroughbred stallion 14.1, "Spring Hill" by "Rugby" out of "Octagon," and the mares are nearly all old polo ponies, either broken down or ones that were not trained or were unsatisfactory in one way or another: they are about 14 to 14.1½ hands.

13068. As to their breeding, are you particular?—As far as I can be. Whenever I am buying I always find out anything I can about the breed.

13069. Have you entered into this as a matter of business?—Yes; not the breeding so much as the buying. The breeding is an experiment. I buy ponies largely in Ireland.

13070. Whereabouts?—In a great many districts, but mostly Wexford and around there, and in Sligo and Fermanagh.

13071. What kind of ponies are they?—I find the Sligo ponies are the best generally that I have come across. They are all practically by thoroughbred stallions, and as a rule the polo pony of the present day is a fluke—the breeding of it. It is either first foal or brought up on bad land or that sort of thing, and grown small; in fact they are miniature hunters.

13072. What age do you buy them at?—Nearly all four off or five. I buy them in the autumn.

13073. And you keep them and train them?—Train them, and sell them at five years old or more.

13074. I suppose a polo pony to fetch any price must be "made"?—Must be trained.

13075. Have you tried and bought any of these Connemara ponies?—No; not plain Connemara ponies. I believe some of the ponies I have got have got the Connemara strain in them, but afterwards thoroughbred blood was introduced.

13076. Do you know the congested districts—the western parts of Ireland yourself?—No, I have never been in Donegal, but I have been in Sligo.

13077. Ever been in Kerry?—No.

13078. Do you employ anybody to buy?—I employ men to look out for them for me. I have got one man that buys a certain amount, and then I go to him and select.

13079. How long have you been buying and selling these ponies?—Six years now.

13080. And you find it on the whole successful?—Yes. I got some amusement out of it: there is not much in it.

13081. What about breeding ponies?—It is difficult to say, because it is so hard to breed a pony. You have to practically breed a pony to an inch or an inch and a half, but certainly I think that where it pays is that men breeding hunters get a lot of ponies. As a rule I find that the ponies I buy have been bred originally to be hunters, and there is undoubtedly a good market for a good pony: if a man gets it he can always get a price that pays him.

13082. Your experience of breeding of course has not been long enough to say?—No.

13083. What do you expect to do with the produce that are just too big or too small—what kind of sale do you expect?—Practically very small. You will either send them into a fair in Ireland and get for a four-year-old about £15 probably, or £20 possibly, or else you might bring them over and sell them in England as hacks for £35.

13084. I gather from you, that for your purpose you prefer a small thoroughbred sire?—Yes.

13085. To anything?—Yes; it need not be a small sire. I mean my best animals have been by well known sires, such as "Buckshot" and "Loved One."

13086. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say the best stallions you have used have been "Buckshot" and "Loved One"?—Yes; and "Rattlecash" was a very good polo pony sire; certain stallions seem to get good ponies.

13087. They have all, I suppose, been thoroughbred stallions?—Yes.

13088. And for that particular purpose would you like to go to any other breed?—No.

13089. Do you think that the small farmer in the West of Ireland would make these polo ponies remunerative breeding—they are able to do it no doubt a good deal cheaper than you could do it yourself?—It is very hard to say, because I found, from my experience of breeding, that to breed to the height is the great difficulty. I think as the polo pony stud book is now started, we shall find out how to do it; but at present this is more or less a new business, and I don't think that people have discovered yet quite which is the way to do it.

13090. But from what you know, what sort of stallions should you send into the congested districts with a view of trying to breed these polo ponies?—I should send small thoroughbred stallions or a high class Arab, not a Barb.

13091. What is your objection to a Barb?—My experience is, that a Barb has not the pluck, has not as good shoulders—they have generally bad shoulders—and doesn't stay like the Arab. There is as great a difference between an Arab and a Barb as there is between an English thoroughbred, and, I was going to say, a harness horse.

13092. You think that anything that is sent into the West of Ireland it is essential that it should be thoroughbred, with a view of getting both courage and stamina—endurance?—Yes.

13093. Should you be afraid if Hackney blood was introduced into the West of Ireland that it would damage the breed for the polo pony?—Yes.

13094. And should you think that if it was introduced into one part that it would permeate the rest of the country in time?—I don't see how you could help it, because horses travel very far and travel a long way to fairs now; they are sold in one part of the country and taken to another part, and there is no doubt that it would permeate.

13095. Have you ever formed any sort of opinion as to what would be the best means of trying to induce farmers to keep their better mares in the country?—I have not formed any workable opinion, but I think the way would be, to register mares; it would cost an enormous amount.

13096. Then if you only had a limited amount of money should you prefer to spend that mainly on the stallions, and leave the mares to chance?—I think it would take too much money to attempt to keep the mares in the country, and that the best thing is to make sure of keeping good stallions.

13097. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Your breeding is confined principally to polo ponies?—Yes.

13098. You have not been breeding?—I have been breeding polo ponies four years. I have four-year-olds this time.

13099. You are hopeful of establishing a breed of polo ponies?—I won't say I am hopeful, I am experimenting. I should not be satisfied till I tried, and I am trying to see what I can do.

13100. You are trying now with short-sized thoroughbreds?—14.1.

13101. And the mares?—About 14 to 14.1½.

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13102. Not under that?—I have got two: 13.3 they are, I think.

13103. The standard of the polo rules is under 14.2?—Yes.

13104. Do you think you will be able by that cross to breed animals with any certainty—you say it is an experiment?—No; I think I will get a certain amount—I am afraid rather a small proportion to begin with; it depends so very much on the sire. I was the first to use him, and one sire gets big stock where another gets small; and if he happens to get small stock—if he gets them like himself—you will probably get out of most of these mares the right size, but he may throw back to big stock.

13105. You prefer the thoroughbred and Arab, not the Barb?—Yes.

13106. But there has been a Barb very successful in breeding?—Lord Harrington's "Awfully Jolly" bred some good ponies, but I don't think he ever bred ponies that were equal to the Irish-bred animal at all.

13107. Equal to the Arab, do you think?—Well, his ponies were before my time, rather, and I only knew about two of them and I only rode one of them, and I rode that when it was rather old. I don't like them as well as Arabs.

13108. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—With regard to breeding polo ponies, do you think anybody can breed a polo pony with any certainty at all in the height and the requisite quality?—I don't think you can yet. I don't think you can say that out of that mare you can breed a pony 14.1.

13109. You profess to be trying with very great care and trouble to breed a polo pony. Do you think that in indiscriminate breeding that the small mares in the West of Ireland that the farmers have could breed a pony that would be of very great value to them?—I think they would get a certain amount of them that would be very good ponies if they had the right size.

13110. How do you think they could get rid of these ponies, because a polo pony is not a polo pony until he is made, and therefore they would only be sold as chance ponies at very small prices?—There are a great many men now all going over Ireland who will always give a goodish price for a pony that in their opinion would make a good polo pony, and I think that the price that would be given for the raw pony now, which has increased in the last ten years a good deal, would pay for breeding in the poor districts.

13111. You advocate the thoroughbred and the Arab. Do you think that the Hackney is capable of getting the right stamp of polo pony?—Certainly not.

13112. Why not?—Because the Hackney, in my opinion, is not made for a riding animal—he is entirely for trotting. I have never seen one that could gallop and heavy in the shoulder, which is absolutely useless for polo.

13113. Then you don't want this high action in the polo pony, I presume?—No.

13114. You want him for speed?—You want him for speed.

13115. Sir THOMAS ESMONDE.—Do you say you are breeding or buying ponies in Wexford?—I am doing both.

13116. Do you get many ponies there to buy?—Yes; a good many ponies come from the county Wexford.

13117. Mostly bred in the country?—Mostly in Wexford and Carlow.

13118. Which is the district where you get most of your ponies from?—I should say I get more from Wexford than anywhere else, because it is handier and I know it very well, and I hear of every good pony in it.

13119. What sort is the sire of your own?—A small thoroughbred called "Springhill"; he is one of the Yardley stud.

13120. Mr. WRENCH.—If you think the breeding of a polo pony is more or less of a fluke, do you think it would be at all a certain business for farmers to engage in?—No; it can't be.

13121. Would you prefer what we call a dwarfed thoroughbred as a polo pony to any other breed?—The best polo pony is what I call the dwarf 14 stone hunter—a miniature Irish blood hunter.

13122. As nearly thoroughbred as possible?—As nearly thoroughbred as possible with substance.

13123. Do you buy many polo ponies in Ireland in the year?—Yes, fifty or sixty in the year.

13124. Do you think that animals bred for polo ponies if they attempted to breed them for polo ponies would be as useful for the people to work on their farms as animals bred from a stronger breed?—They would not make good plough horses I should say, if that is what you mean.

13125. I mean in places where they have to use their produce to work on the farms—do you think they would be as useful as stronger animals?—They are as useful as most animals. I see them working, but in Ireland they don't use the strong animals in the districts I have been to.

13126. I don't mean very strong?—But as a rule they are using weedy animals about 15 hands or that sort of thing. At least I see a lot of these used, and I think a good well-bred strong pony 14.2 would be more useful than a weed of 15 hands.

13127. But it might not be so useful as a stronger built animal?—No, certainly not.

13128. CHAIRMAN.—You don't know the western seaboard yourself personally?—No.

13129. And from personal experience you don't know what kind of animal is wanted to do the farm work, such as it is?—No; not in those parts.

13130. I gather from you that the price you can get for a good made polo pony is such that it might pay as a business, even although of course a considerable number of the produce are not fit for polo ponies at all?—Yes.

13131. That is your general idea. You would not expect to get a very large proportion of polo ponies?—No.

The Commission adjourned.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY—FRIDAY, MARCH 12TH, 1897.

March 12, 1897.

Sitting at 12, Hanover-square London, W.

Present:—THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN, K.P. (in the Chair); MR. J. L. CAREW, M.P.; HON. H. W. FITZWILLIAM; MR. PERCY LA TOUCHE; COLONEL ST. QUINTIN; EARL OF ENNISKILLEN; SIR WALTER GILBEY; LORD RATHDONNELL; MR. F. S. WRENCH.

MR. HUGH NEVILLE, Secretary.

Captain FIFE, Langton Hall, Northallerton, examined.

13132. CHAIRMAN.—You were a Captain in the 9th Lancers?—Yes, my lord.

13133. And you are a member of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—Yes.

13134. You have taken a great interest in horse-breeding for a number of years?—Yes; in fact all my life I have been interested in it.

13135. You originated the Compton Stud Farm?—Yes.

13136. When was the Stud Farm started?—In 1886. We have been going on ever since.

13137. Could you tell us the general principles on which it has been founded, and how it has been carried on?—Dorsetshire, I must tell you, was a country in which hunters were not bred. Nobody used to breed them in that country. The farmers used to buy them from the Irish drovers, ride them, and sell them again. At the time I was interested in the farmers having just given up my yeomanry appointment, and Major Goodden and I said we would get a thoroughbred horse for the farmers. We got two, "Master Ned" and "King Crafty." They both did very well in the country, especially "Master Ned." We had two stallions that year, the next year we had three, the next year four; then we got to five and to six stallions. We have generally five thoroughbred stallions down there, and one cob for breeding ponies. We hold an annual show. Our great object was not only to breed horses, but to provide the farmers with a market, and we settled to hold a show every year for the produce of our own stallions. We held our first show in 1888, and we had 189 entries, the next year we had 195, the next we had 264, the next year we had 349, and the next year we had 451 exhibits; next year we had 329, next year, 329, next year, 269. We did not have so many that year because we had no auction for young stock. We only sold aged stock. We came back to selling the young stock last year, and we had 304 exhibits. Messrs. Tattersall come down and hold a sale every year; the first year, that is in 1888, we sold 13, next year we sold 20, the next year 48, the next year 71, the next 81, next 57, next 75, next 65, and last year we sold 80. The first year we realised £387, and the last year we realised £3,179, and our biggest year we realised £4,100. The total number of animals that have been exhibited within the last nine years is 2,675; the number of animals sold is 510; the value of the sales has been £23,600, and the average per head has been £46. We sell from foals up to aged stock. In 1891 our six-year-olds averaged 70 guineas; in 1892 they averaged 82 guineas; the next year they averaged 101; next year they averaged 66; next year they averaged 60, and last year they averaged 40 guineas. Five-year-olds averaged 71 guineas in 1891, next year 71½, next year 74, next year 34, next year 65½, next year 55½. Four-year-olds in 1891 averaged 90 guineas, next year 74½, next year 52½, next year 48, next year 66, next year 49. The three-year-olds in 1891 averaged 35 guineas, next year 40½, next year 34½, next year 33, next year 60, and next year 35. Do you care for further details?

13138. I think you might give them?—Two-year-olds in 1891 averaged 33 guineas, next year 30, next 28½, next year 54, next year 33½, and next year 46. Yearlings in 1891 averaged 27 guineas, next year 30, next year 18, next year 19, next 25, and last year they averaged 19. The foals in 1891 averaged 24½ guineas, next year 17, next year 15, next year 18, next year 20, and last year the foals averaged 18 guineas. Captain Fife.

13139. How do you account for the large fluctuations in the price?—Of course, where there is a small number of animals sold, if you happen to get a very large price for one it influences considerably the averages, and besides that there has been considerable depreciation in the value of all stock, horses in particular are very much cheaper now than they used to be ten years ago. I attribute that greatly to the importation of cheap American horses—which has especially depreciated anything in the way of a harness horse—both high class harness horses and the common 'bus or cab horse have gone down considerably in value. I think the best trade we have got is in hunters—that is the only trade in which we seem to have a monopoly.

13140. All your stallions are thoroughbreds?—All thoroughbred, with the exception of the pony. He is a cross really. He is in the Hackney Stud Book, but he is dead now. He had a good deal of thoroughbred blood in him.

13141. What kind of mares did you put him to?—Ponies of thirteen or fourteen hands.

13142. Are there ponies in that part of the country?—Yes, there are just a few, he would get perhaps twenty mares, or something of that sort in a season.

13143. What kind of mares are they generally?—They have improved tremendously. They were very bad in the country when we commenced—very common—and they have improved very much, as the mares—the produce of our stallions—are very much better, and now a great many mares come to the horse that have got perhaps the second or third cross of our own blood. These make good brood mares. All our best stock are bred in that way; they are nearly all those whose dams were sired by our own horses.

13144. Are they bred close in?—Well, they are bred rather in. I have used a good deal of "King Tom" blood, "Huguenot," and the "King Crafty" for instance, and the one following the other always seem to answer.

13145. Can you tell us what kind of fees you charge the farmers?—We charge the farmers half fees—50*s.*—for the ordinary horses, but for an exceptional horse like "Yardarm," we charge five guineas.

13146. Do you exercise any selection of the mares; do you let any man put any mare to one of your horses if he pays the fees?—We never prohibit; we never say, "No, you are not to." We advise them; we may tell them we don't think a mare is worth breeding from, but if they go against our advice we don't prohibit them. They did not listen to us at

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first, but they do now. I think they have learned some lessons—and also in the selection of one horse rather than another. We generally have some strong horses suitable for well-bred mares, and we have some blood like horses that we consider are suitable for coarser mares. At first they would not listen to advice. They all went for the big horse and put their coarse mares to him, but now they ask our advice as to the matter.

13147. Of the stock of these stallions that you have told us of, what proportion do the hunters bear to the others?—They are all bred for hunters, but of course the misfits are harness horses. Where you put a thoroughbred horse with nice action to a coarse mare you may get a harness horse if he is not a hunter, owing, perhaps, to his having moderate shoulders or something of that sort. Some very nice harness horses are bred in this way.

13148. The object of the breeder is to breed a hunter?—Yes; to breed a hunter.

13149. How many classes have you in your shows?—We divide colts and fillies, and we divide gentlemen's classes and farmers' classes. We think the gentlemen have more opportunity of getting their animals up into show form, so that we generally let them show separately, and we follow that right through in foals, yearlings, two-year-olds, and three-year-olds. We have a large class every year of brood mares; we have sometimes had over 100 brood mares exhibited in the show, and we cover ten mares free every year by our best horses—the ten best mares in the country are covered free. We find this a great encouragement to the men who would keep a good mare. Some mares have gone on, year after year, getting the services free.

13150. Are many of these horses bought privately?—What I have quoted are bought at the sales, or perhaps some of them are bought privately on the sale ground. They give us notice in the office of their being sold. They are either sold the day after or the day before sometimes, but in connection with the show.

13151. Do you know whether many of the mares are bought to go abroad?—No; I don't think we have had any instance of people coming down to buy mares to take abroad.

13152. Could you tell us any more about the Compton Stud before we go into some general questions?—As regards financial or any particulars of that sort—well, financially we have always made it cover its expenses, but in making this calculation Captain Hornby and myself, who work it, don't take any pay as directors. If it was done by a Society or by Government you would have to pay the people who look after it—we charge nothing for that and in that way it pays. We have made it clear its expenses by selling horses very often to the foreigners; we always buy the best horses we can and perhaps use them for three or four years, and if we have an opportunity of selling the horse at a good profit he goes, and our district has had the benefit of him for a certain number of years. The farmers very often say—"We are very sorry you sold such and such a horse, we were just getting fond of him, and it is a great disappointment to us." I always say—"We never could afford to give the money we have given for our stallions just for your benefit unless we can get it back again." If you give £1,000 for a horse to begin with, and keep him a certain number of years, he will rapidly depreciate till he is worth only a couple of hundred pounds, therefore we try to sell him before that loss occurs, and in that way make both ends meet.

13153. Do you think it has been a benefit to the country?—A considerable benefit to the country; there were no good hunters bred in the country at all before this began, and now there are some first-class hunters to be bought every year at our shows, with a good many crosses of blood, and those that have been sold have all done well. I am continually meeting people who say—"Oh, I bought a horse at your sale two years ago and he is as good a horse as I could wish." They have always given satisfaction where they have gone to.

13154. And if that advantage could be estimated in money you would say the whole thing has paid very well; it has absolutely paid its expenses, and besides that it is a great advantage to the people?—Oh, yes. Actually the show is an annual loss, it costs us a good deal of money.

13155. Could you tell us what you give in prizes?—The first year we gave £40, then we gave £76, then we gave £106, £100, £115, £129. We have given away £1,075 in the nine years. Then we have been out of pocket for the show £1,400 in nine years; it costs us a little over £150 a year; we have sold altogether £23,600 worth of stock, the property of the farmers.

13156. Have you any mares of your own?—Not that we count in the stud account. I have mares of my own, and Captain Hornby has mares, but we don't enter them on the account at all, we pay for them privately ourselves, and deal with the produce. I only just have enough mares to breed horses for my own riding. I am now breeding thoroughbred stock; I have between thirty and forty thoroughbred mares, and it takes me all my time to look after them without further responsibility.

13157. Mr. La Touche.—What mares, as a rule, do the farmers in the Compton Stud district breed from, big mares or small mares?—As a rule, to commence with, common, underbred mares, but we have had much more success since we have got more blood in the mares. The mares that are out of the common mares by our thoroughbred horses make very much better mares than the first lot.

13158. What sort of stock did those mares produce before your stud commenced?—Oh, there were hardly any horses bred in the country.

13159. They did not try to breed horses of any sort or description?—No, hardly, I think. Before we commenced at the shows in the neighbourhood there were no classes for young stock, there was so little breeding, and at the Sherborne Show in 1886 probably, or 1887, it was just before our own young stock came out, I proposed that there should be a class for young stock; they said they thought there would not be enough to make a class. I said—"Let us have a class for yearlings, two-year-old, and three-year-old combined, the best of the three ages," and I think we only had seven or eight entries for the three ages combined.

13160. I take it you charge the farmers 50*s.*?—Yes.

13161. Had you ever any experience of half-bred stallions in the Compton stud?—No, never.

13162. You never bought anything that was not in the stud book?—Never, except our pony; his stock vary from 12.2 to 14.2; I think he was just over 14 hands himself.

13163. Do you see any similarity between the mares of the Compton district and the Irish mares?—The Irish mares have got a good deal more quality, but I must say our present mares that they are breeding from are more similar to the Irish mares; our present mares have been produced by our own stallions, and the farmers have come round to the way of thinking; they find that the better bred mares breed better stock.

13164. Was there any resemblance between the Dorsetshire mare in her unimproved condition and the bad sort of mare you remember in Ireland?—Oh, well, perhaps the bad sort, but they were coarser, commoner, underbred, mixed with the cart. Where they had a mare kept to ride or drive into market, and that sort of thing, they were in the habit pretty often of putting her to a cart stallion, so there was that cross about.

13165. Of nondescript cart blood?—Oh, yes.

13166. Since the operation of your stud these

mares they use for riding and driving into market and breeding from have very much improved?—Very much improved—they have more quality, are better animals.

13167. And their produce I suppose has improved too?—And their produce is improved.

13168. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—Were any of these in the sales that you held, the averages you gave us, was there any thoroughbred stock or was it all half-bred stock?—All half-bred stock.

13169. Sir W. GILBEY.—It was at your suggestion that I first interested myself in the Hunter Improvement Society; you were modest just now in answering the questions asked. It may not be generally known that you really were the pioneer, it was through you that I took it up, and we worked together. And may I ask do you think the Society has assisted your breeding operations?—The Hunters' Improvement Society has immensely assisted our breeding operations. I am glad you asked me that question. On the subject of the financial state of the Compton stud, I know it never would have made both ends meet if it had not been for the Hunters' Improvement Society and the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding. Before the existence of the Hunters' Improvement Society and the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding I dare not have given £1,000 for a stallion, because you had no means of showing that he was a better horse than other people's; he would have gone down to Dorsetshire, nobody would have seen him, and he would have remained there until he got too old, and I should have had to pay a depreciation of £800 probably on him. But at the show that is held if I have a first class horse he comes up here every year, people see him, and it brings more mares to him. The Compton stud never could have paid it if it had been solely dependent on the custom that it would have got from Dorsetshire and the South of England. To a horse like "Yardarm" we have mares sent from all over England, the gentlemen pay double fees, and that is what supports the horse for the benefit of the farmers. And then there has been the annual premium, which we have generally taken, of £150 a year, and that has helped us on tremendously. And the fact of winning those premiums makes your horse more valuable; you can use him in the country and then sell him for as much as you gave for him and perhaps more; therefore I think, owing to the united efforts of the Hunters' Improvement Society and the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding, the Compton stud has been able to carry on without loss, which it certainly never could have done if it had not been for the efforts of the Society.

13170. Your principal object was to improve the breed of hunters?—Yes, entirely for hunters.

13171. Do you keep a strict record of all the mares that you have to your horses?—Yes.

13172. You attach a great deal of importance to that?—In what way, Sir Walter?

13173. I ask that question because many of the gentlemen who keep stud horses keep no particulars of the names of the mares or the owners of the mares?—Oh, yes, we could tell the date any mare in any year had been served; there is a record of every service.

13174. And you consider it important that a record should be kept of the mares that came to your horses?—I think it is a great advantage that it should be.

13175. Mr. CAREW.—I think you said in reply to the Chairman that the hunter misfits made excellent harness horses?—Yes.

13176. And fetch fair prices?—Yes; there is a bad sale I am afraid for harness horses now, on account of this foreign competition.

13177. Mr. WRENCH.—How many services do you allow for each of your horses?—You mean how many mares. That is a question that varies so much, it is a thing you cannot make a rule about; there is the age of the horse to be considered, also the first year he goes to the stud he should not have so many mares as he can the next, and so on the year after. If he went to the stud at six he could take more mares the first year than he could supposing he went at three. Then it depends so much on each individual horse; one horse will get his mares in foal the first time he serves them; that horse can take twice as many mares as another horse that is not so sure, probably the latter has to serve his mare, and she turns and comes back again, so you cannot make any sort of calculation as to the number of mares that a horse has or ought to have until you deal with the individual horse.

13178. Take the outside limit, the greatest number of actual services you would give to a horse?—I could not say that, it is a difficult question to say that.

13179. You don't fix any limit?—No, we don't fix any limit; but when we think a horse has got as many mares as he should have we close his list, and it makes such a lot of difference to the horse if you get half a dozen barren mares that are going to turn to the horse all the season through; I would rather have twelve foaling mares than half a dozen barren mares, or even a larger proportion than that. It depends each year on what mares you happen to get sent to you.

13180. Do you know at all the average number of services that each horse has had?—I have not got it with me. I could have it from the books; this (produced) is what they have sent me, but they have not gone into the number of services.

13181. If it is a fair question to ask you—I don't want the price of any particular horse—but about what price do you pay for your thoroughbred stallions?—Oh, I pay all sorts of prices.

13182. What do you find you can get them at?—1,000 guineas is the highest I have paid. I gave 1,000 for "Yardarm," and refused £2,000 for him the year before last.

13183. Do you find you can get horses much cheaper than that?—Oh dear, yes; they can certainly be bought cheaper than that. I gave £1,000 for "Aerides." I used him for two seasons, and sold him for £1,200; we had the use of the horse, and won two premiums with him.

13184. Do you find you can get a suitable thoroughbred stallion for what you want much under £500?—You may buy one for £50 as good as you give £1,000 for, but on an average I should like to go up as a rule to £500—I should say from £300 to £500. You are very lucky to get a first class horse for £300 or £400, and £500 would be a fair price, but you very often might for a special horse have to give more. I have mentioned the two most expensive horses I have bought.

13185. About what size are the farms in your district?—They are generally dairy farms. I don't think they are very large farms.

13186. You have no idea of the average—about 100 acres do you think?—Oh, yes; I should think a great many of them are above that.

13187. What would you call a small farm?—I should call from 50 acres to 100 acres.

13188. Do you think that the fact of the buyers at your sales knowing the way in which the horses are bred has put up their price?—Oh, considerably; they will always give more money for the stock by certain sires, a sire that is popular, or that gets stock that do well. I think they will always buy anything by "Master Ned," for instance, because they know his stock have proved themselves such very good hunters. "Yardarm" has not had an opportunity of proving himself yet, but he happens to be a very popular horse.

13189. CHAIRMAN.—How long have you had him?—This is the fourth season.

13190. Mr. CAREW.—Did not "Master Ned" stand

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in Ireland?—Yes, I bought him in Ireland, and he went back to Ireland; he has gone back there again. If you ever have a chance of buying a "Master Ned" hunter, he is a good hunter, he never has to be taught to jump.

13191. Mr. WRENCH.—You think that because there is an absolute certainty about the pedigrees in your sales it has put the price up?—Oh, yes, certainly.

13192. I think you said the ordinary mares in the district were really the produce of the roadster mare crossed with a cart horse?—No, I don't think they had any roadster blood in them.

13193. What was the original animal they were bred out of?—I don't know, and I don't suppose the owners knew themselves.

13194. Cart-horse blood in them?—Very often when they got what they call a nag mare, a thing that they could ride and drive. Their idea of breeding was to put her to a cart-horse, to get something to go in milk carts.

13195. I suppose those mares were mostly up to 15.2, were they?—Oh, yes.

13196. Or more?—Yes, they would be of all sorts and sizes.

13197. You think that the Hunters' Improvement Society in England has effected a considerable improvement in the breeding of hunters in England?—I am sure it has.

13198. Would you like to see a Hunters' Improvement Society started in Ireland or your Hunters' Improvement Society extended largely to Ireland?—I should like to see it extended to Ireland.

13199. CHAIRMAN.—Do your horses travel the country?—We travel through the districts, our own establishment is in the centre, and when we send a horse out he goes by train. We never allow him to try or serve mares on the road; if he is walking from the station and has a mile to go we never allow our man to try or serve mares at any but the appointed places. We consider there is a great risk of accidents, we consider it leads men into the temptation of getting drunk and all that sort of thing, and also we know that everything is done in a regular manner if the mare is served at a certain place; there is generally a man there responsible for what does happen. Horses go out by train and stop perhaps a couple of nights at one place, and go on by train to another and stop a couple of nights, and they take about three places which are the centres of districts, and we have two horses out in different directions, and then our own four horses stand in the centre and mares are sent into them.

13200. In that way you occupy a considerable range of country?—Yes, I should think we cover about twenty miles by thirty with our stallions and mares outside that come to meet them.

13201. You live yourself in Yorkshire?—Yes.

13202. Why did you select Dorsetshire?—I had a yeomanry appointment, I had the North Somerset Yeomanry for five years, and I was living there during the time I held my appointment, and having a house there I went on living there until I came up to Yorkshire.

13203. It was not on account of any particular advantages?—No.

13204. On the contrary, I gather from you that you thought the class of mares were not very suitable for breeding hunters?—No, we could not have a worse start than we had.

13205. Can you tell us anything about the pony stallion—I think you said he got produce from 12½ to 14.2?—Yes.

13206. What becomes of them?—They drive about in traps, and they are sold at our sales for general purposes.

13207. Are any of them turned into polo ponies?—No, I don't think so; they had not quite quality enough.

13208. You know Ireland well, don't you?—Yes.

13209. The whole of the country?—No, I cannot say the whole of the country; my experience of Ireland was more in the South. I was quartered at Cahir when I first joined my regiment, and my experience of Ireland is more confined to that district and to Cahirmee fair and the Dublin Horse Show. I used to buy horses there a good deal at one time. When I was buying hunters I always bought my hunters in Ireland before I took to breeding my own.

13210. Taking the parts of the country that produce these high-class hunters, roughly say the South, I think you said that the general quality of the mares is superior to that of the mares at any rate that you found in Dorsetshire?—Oh, certainly.

13211. Much superior?—Much superior.

13212. And for them would you recommend the same class of stallion as you have got in Dorsetshire?—Yes, I should recommend the same class of stallion.

13213. I take it you would recommend the thoroughbred?—Recommend the thoroughbred.

13214. What is your opinion about the half-bred hunter sire?—When I use the word half-bred I mean the ordinary half-bred horse, that is by a thoroughbred horse out of an ordinary animal without any particularly authenticated pedigree. I don't believe in him at all, but I believe strongly in the horse that we have recently approved of in the Hunters' Improvement Society, that is a horse with four crosses of blood commencing with a registered mare. If that is put on paper it is found that he cannot be less than 31 parts out of 32 thoroughbred—he is virtually a thoroughbred horse. In introducing a horse of that description you might get some horses of extra power, which I think is a great advantage. The farmers invariably complain that where they have well-bred mares in putting them to a small thoroughbred they lose size and get something that is not saleable, and unfortunately in consequence of that they go and put their mares in some cases to Clevelands, in some cases to Hackneys, and in some cases to these half-bred horses that they don't know how they are bred, and they breed a lot of common useless animals. I think it would be a great advantage to provide what the Hunters' Improvement Society are now trying to carry out, that is those registered sires with four crosses from registered mares; they would be virtually thoroughbred, and you should get the extra size. I don't mean to say that a thoroughbred horse may not be, and in some cases is, quite as powerful as any horse you will breed in the way we have proposed. For instance, there is no half-bred sire we can produce that will have more power than "Yardarm," and he is clean bred. There is "Royal Meath" in Ireland, he is another of those powerful horses. But there is not a general supply of horses of equal power, and I think it would be a great advantage to the farmers—it is of more importance to the farmers—the introduction of these horses, than it is to the gentlemen, because the gentleman can afford to send his mare a long distance. As I say, we have mares sent from all parts of England to "Yardarm"; a gentleman can afford that, but a farmer cannot; he must go to the horse within reasonable reach of him, and then if there is only a small horse at hand he leaves the thoroughbred altogether, and he goes to some breed that was bred not for quality but for either pulling weight, such as a cart horse, or for the purpose of getting harness horses.

13215. How do you define a farmer?—I think the Secretary of your Commission helped me to find a definition of it—that is, a person who farms as a business and as his sole business.

13216. And if he was engaged in any other business at all?—He would not be a farmer.

13217. Have you bought any hunters in Ireland

lately?—No, I have not. I always have some of my own breeding coming on every year.

13218. Have you formed any opinion as to whether Ireland produces as many good hunters as it used to?—I could hardly give you a good opinion on that. When I have been over at the shows I have been judging thoroughbred stock always for the last few years, so that I have not been so much in the hunter line.

13219. Could you give us any opinion—have you formed any opinion as to whether the hunter-breeding parts of Ireland are properly supplied with stallions?—No; I am afraid my opinion is not worth much.

13220. You have attended a good many of the Dublin Shows?—Yes; I could give you an opinion as to the quality of the thoroughbred stallions. I think that they have improved considerably. I think the thoroughbred stallions have improved in Ireland, but I cannot give you an opinion as to whether the supply is equal to the demand.

13221. The general evidence we have had is that probably the supply is about the same, but the demand is greater?—Yes.

13222. Do you know the Western parts of Ireland at all, the congested districts?—No, I cannot give an opinion as to that.

13223. Or the North?—No.

13224. Do you think that Ireland has succeeded somehow in producing a very superior class of hunter?—I think that it has done so, and not only that but I think the whole of the world acknowledges it. I think Ireland has got a well-deserved name as being the best country in the world to produce hunters, and I think it is of very great importance that Ireland should keep up its individuality as the country to breed hunters in.

13225. Do you attribute that to anything special in the climate or soil?—Well, no doubt both the climate and the soil are suitable to it; but I consider the fact that hitherto the thoroughbred has been so largely used in Ireland has had a good deal to do with it. Years ago there was an absence of cart-horse blood. I have observed that in nearly all of those countries where a class of light cart-horse has been used, like in Devonshire, there have been good hunters bred. In Devon there have been good hunters bred which is attributable I think a great deal to the Devonshire pack mare. Where you have that light description of cart-mare you find that good hunters are bred, very often the cross of the thoroughbred on these animals. Northumberland had a breed of little light active cart-mares—the black mares—good hunters were bred, descendants from them, and I think that the old horses of the country in Ireland that used to do the work of that time had little or no cart blood in them, and I think the success of Ireland is due to the fact that their animals are better bred; they have more of the thoroughbred in them as a rule than they have in other countries where they have got mixed up with the cart blood, and as they have got mixed up with the Hackney in parts of Yorkshire and Norfolk, and in other parts of Yorkshire they have got too much of the Cleveland and coach-horse. All that I think is bad and tends to depreciate the stamina of the hunter.

13226. Do you think it very important in breeding that there should be absolute purity on one side or the other?—Yes, I do; but when I talk of purity of blood I should call "Oswestry," for instance, a thoroughbred horse, although some people would call him a half-bred. Looking at it in that light, the same thing as the Hunters' Improvement Society has suggested in bringing forward four crosses from a registered mare; I look upon him as a thoroughbred horse. But I would rather have a cross of the thoroughbred mare with a horse of that description, either "New Oswestry" or the Hunters' Improvement Society's horse, than the cross of a thoroughbred horse out of a cart mare, or next door to a cart mare, for you have a lot of bad blood in that produce, whereas in the other case you have good blood on both sides.

13227. We have had a good deal of evidence to the effect that there is a deterioration going on in Ireland attributable to a great extent to the fact that the foreigners bought so many of the best mares to go abroad. Assuming that to be so, could you suggest any way in which that could be stopped?—No, I don't think it could be possible to stop it, and it would be very wrong to attempt to do so, for there is no doubt it is hard enough for people to make horse breeding pay, and anything you can do to help to make it pay should be done, and there should be no stop put on their trade in any way. If we were to say they were not to sell their thoroughbred mares, it would damage their trade, and consequently they would breed less horses. What you would gain by keeping good mares in the country you would lose by giving a check to horse-breeding. And although people breed from bad brood mares there are in the country plenty of good brood mares to be got if a person really takes the trouble to get them.

13228. Would you try to induce them by giving them premiums and prizes?—Oh, yes, certainly, by all means. I think that would be the greatest benefit in the world; that would be no check, it would be an encouragement and would induce them to go and get good mares. I frequently have people coming to me and saying "I have an old brood mare that I would like to sell if I can get a good home for her. I will sell her for a tenner or £15, but I cannot get anyone to buy her." I don't think there is a want of brood mares in the country. If I had a commission to buy good brood mares I could get them, and at a very small price.

13229. And in Ireland?—I rather think it would be the same in Ireland, if you like to buy them young. The best time to breed from a brood mare is when she is three year old to make it pay, there are plenty of good three year olds to be bought cheap now in Ireland, and if they were put to the horse you may get a foal and your animal, when it had done with the foal, would be one and a half year older, and if you sold her she should pay for her keep. But I think your suggestion of giving premiums or anything to induce them to breed from good mares instead of bad ones would be of the greatest benefit in the world.

13230. Some of the witnesses have attached very great importance to trying to induce the farmers to keep their good mares, looking upon the mares as almost of vital importance, and others seem rather to have thought that the best thing to do would be to devote one's attention to providing a better class of stallion?—If you provide a good mare she only breeds one foal in the year, if you provide a good stallion he breeds 30 or 40, and by supplying good stallions you produce good brood mares, if you have bad stallions the produce is bad brood mares. Therefore I think the stallions are of the greatest importance to commence with, and the breeder has always at his option the power of choosing his brood mares, but he has not at his option the stallion unless it is provided for him. Unless he has a good stallion within reach, if he has ever such a good mare he is badly handicapped; but I think a man, if he really means it, can get a good brood mare, and if he has a good stallion he ought to have a fair chance of success.

13231. You don't know the congested districts in Ireland, personally, I think you said?—No, my lord, I do not.

13232. Could you give us any opinion from your general experience as to what class of stallion ought to be put to these small, light, weedy mares in that part of the country?—Well, I have had them described to me, that they are under-sized and that they are well-bred. What I should think would be the best cross really would be the thoroughbred with

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extremely good action, that is the best I could suggest as being at present available, I should think it would be no earthly use sending a thoroughbred down there that had not extremely good action, because if you breed a small animal, if it has not action it is not worth much as a hack. Thoroughbreds with exceedingly good action should get nice hacks, nice polo ponies, and useful stock in that way, and if their blood ever came to cross with hunters it would not be the cause of deterioration. I think, in dealing with the congested districts you would always have to consider the general good of the whole of Ireland. I mean Ireland has acquired a name as being the best country in the world for breeding hunters, and I think you have got to consider very carefully about what you do in any particular portion of Ireland, that you do not injure or do harm to the general good of the country, and in introducing the thoroughbred in the form of a stepping thoroughbred or otherwise it would not interfere with the general good of the breeding in the rest of the districts, as it would if the Hackney blood was introduced. But I should like to see in the future—it would take a few years to produce—some, say a dozen Hackney mares, crossed with a horse like "Erskine," that, perhaps, a good many of you may have seen at the Horse Show this week, a thoroughbred horse with very beautiful action, beautiful shoulder, knee, and hock action, and if their female produce was kept and crossed again with another thoroughbred horse of similar characteristics, and the male produce kept as stallions, I think that that horse would be a most useful horse to use for the congested districts, they might be a little broader, and have a little more bulk than the thoroughbreds that would be used in the first instance, and I think they would have just as good action as the Hackneys have at present—I mean riding action,—and they would breed a class of animal from these mares of the congested districts that would not only be useful as harness horses, but they would be useful as riding horses, and if ever the produce of these animals I have just recommended was to be crossed with a thoroughbred to breed a hunter, I don't think there would be sufficient Hackney blood in them to do harm.

13233. I gather you think the system of registration is very useful in Ireland?—Yes.

13234. That it would be useful, anywhere?—I don't quite understand what you mean by registration. When we talk in England of registered horses, they are these horses that have just this strain in them; we don't register the thoroughbred horses.

13235. Under the Hunters' Improvement Society?—No, we only register those that have a stain which are admitted under certain rules, which guarantees their being next door to thoroughbred.

13236. Have you ever considered the question of registration of mares?—I think it would be a very good thing, we have it in England as much as we possibly can. The Hunters' Improvement Society registers all the best mares in the country; I think it is of the greatest importance in the world, as it is an inducement to owners to keep their mares and take a little pride in them. If they are in the book they don't like to sell them, and they think a good deal of them, it has done good in England, and I think it would do good in Ireland if that was extended. I am sure the Hunters' Improvement Society would be very glad indeed to lend any assistance in their power to extend this book to include Ireland as well as England. There are some Irish mares registered in that book as it is, but they could be registered either mixed with the English mares, or they could be registered as they are in the general stud book, as an appendix at the end, of Irish mares entirely, whichever was the wish of the Irish people.

13237. Some witnesses have gone as far as to say there ought to be a compulsory registration of all horses in Ireland, horses, mares, and their produce, supposing it to be practical, do you think it would be valuable?—I am always adverse to trying to drive people; you asked me the question at the very beginning of my examination, as to whether we prohibited certain mares coming to our stallions, I have never done it, I always find I can do more with the people by leading them rather than driving them; I think if you provide them with a book, and give them every inducement to enter, you would do more than by anything compulsory.

13238. Would you object to the system of licensing stallions, it has been stated in evidence that in the poorer districts the class of thoroughbred stallions was decidedly inferior and unsound, and that they ought to be all licensed and not allowed to exist unless they had a licence?—I prefer to try other ways first, to try subsidising stallions in that particular district where the stallions are very bad, I think if there was a subsidised stallion in that particular district at a reasonable fee people would go to that horse in preference to others; it is so difficult draw to the line, and to be sufficiently fair in working compulsory registration. If you have compulsory registration, you must have a veterinary surgeon examination, it must be subject to that, there are many good horses that are passed one year and they are rejected the next, we have had instances of this at these shows in London where horses have cataract one year and next year they have no cataract; they have spavins one year and no spavins the next, it would be ridiculous that these horses, perhaps the most beautiful horses in the world and perfect in every respect except this, which after all is a quibble, should be wiped out altogether; you could not register a horse without a veterinary surgeon's certificate.

13239. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—They are all registered now?—But not compulsorily.

13240. No prizes are given by the Society?—Oh, yes, that is the best way to do it, you are getting the thing all in your own hands. The Jockey Club have got everything in their own hands, so if you won't run under their rules they will not give you prizes. It is the same thing if you like to make rules that you won't have a horse at the Dublin Show unless he is bred on certain lines, and you are at liberty to do so—I should prefer that to compulsory registration.

13241. CHAIRMAN.—I gather from you generally that you think that Ireland having achieved a considerable reputation for producing hunters, it would be wise to keep her attention directed to producing that kind of horse?—I think it is of equal importance to Ireland as regards horses as it is to Jersey and Guernsey, which have a celebrated breed of Channel Island cattle there; and it is equally to the disadvantage of Ireland that cart horses and Hackneys and Cleveland stallions should be imported into Ireland as it would be to the disadvantage of Jersey and Guernsey if a shorthorn bull was sent there. A lot of people might argue why should we not breed shorthorn cattle in Jersey, or breed what we like, but no doubt for the benefit of the whole country, they have a law that no other cattle is allowed on the island except that which is pure bred, and the whole world knows that is one of the most valuable cattle that you can get.

13242. And I think you are of opinion that foreign competition interferes a good deal with the harness horse?—I think it has tremendously, the bus horses, a large quantity of them are bought abroad, they cannot sell horses in America now, it costs very little bringing them over here, they cannot get rid of them in their own country, and they are sending them over here as fast as they can, at whatever prices they fetch. They are selling animals at £20 a piece—the same class of animal that we used to be buying in England for £30 or £40—and it is ruining our trade in the cheap horses, and in high-class harness horses, too,

they are getting them from the Continent. We have got a speciality in England and Ireland—Ireland especially—for breeding hunters: no country can touch us in that as yet.

13243. We have not the same competition in hunters from abroad?—No. They would always give more for an Irish or English hunter than for one that they knew had been bred in America or on the Continent; but it is not so with a harness horse—they will give as much for a harness horse if he steps, wherever he is bred.

13244. Assuming a Government grant for the improvement of the industry in Ireland, have you any opinion as to how it would be best applied—whether in subsidising or in the institution of stud farms?—The institution of stud farms is a tremendously costly affair always. If things are done by private enterprise people do them in a much more economical way, and if a man manages it badly he has to suffer himself, therefore it makes him very careful; but it is very difficult to be sure that you have got a capable man, and even if you have got one when he retires or dies that you get a successor that is capable, so that it is a very difficult thing to carry on Government studs successfully and with economy. I should rather see that experiment tried for these congested districts of the Hackney mares with two crosses of the thoroughbred, the thoroughbred being specially chosen for action. I should like to see their produce used in the congested districts, and I believe that would do a great deal of good, and I believe it would meet the want that there seems to be. The people in the country seem to want something suitable for breeding hacks, and I think it would meet that, and I don't think it would injure the prospects of the country in general as regards breeding hunters. I think it is too large a question to go into that of a Government stud, but if one was kept at all it might be kept for thoroughbred mares particularly chosen for their suitability to produce hunters, and thoroughbred sires chosen for the same reason, and their produce kept entire; those that were not quite good enough might be sold for steeplechasing, and the extra good ones—I mean for make and shape—would be kept as sires. An establishment of that sort might do a good deal of work, and those that were chosen for stallions might be sold in Ireland, with a reserve that they were never to leave the country. I think horses, such as are required, might be bred true to type. Unfortunately in breeding thoroughbred stock you don't want to breed a horse too much like a hunter, too big; you get him slow, and if you have a big mare you never think of putting her to a big horse that was likely to breed a great clumsy brute—I mean in the racing way he would be a great clumsy brute, though in the hunting way he would be a weight-carrying hunter. That might be carried on by a Government stud, and it might fairly pay its expenses; of course it would cost a certain amount of money.

13245. What would you do with the mares?—I should breed from them again, and you would have the two crosses, and when you have bred from them and taken a foal or two you could sell them as steeplechase horses.

13246. You would not distribute the mares or sell them cheap?—Oh, no, because they would all be thoroughbred. I think you would get a price for them that would very nearly pay for breeding them.

13247. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You think you could raise up a breed of stallions out of these thoroughbred mares chosen for action—short-legged mares; in fact that if you were given the opportunity to do it at the Compton Stud you would in a short time be able to produce a class of stallion that you would like to recommend in Ireland?—Oh, yes, certainly.

13248. But I presume you would require help from Government, because you would have to keep those mares?—Yes.

13249. Of course you could buy mares cheaply—thoroughbred mares, of good make and shape, although they might not have the most fashionable pedigrees, at Doncaster or at Newmarket. I think you could get them for £25 to £50 a piece?—Yes, and there is always a demand for hunt race-horses. If you had a certain number of colts you would make your selection of any that you thought good enough for keeping for stallions, and those you thought not quite good enough for that would command a price of from £100 to £300 a piece as three-year-olds for hunt race-horses, and the young mares might leave a foal, and then sell for what would go some way towards paying for their breeding. *March 12, 1897.* Captain Fife.

13250. But as it is now, do you think that with a reasonable price you can buy suitable stallions, suitable for Ireland—thoroughbred ones?—Oh, yes.

13251. With action and short legs?—They are to be bought, but there is a great deal of trouble to find them; they are not to be bought in large numbers. That is really why I have so approved of the registration of those horses with a stain in their pedigree. Suitable thoroughbreds are not to be bought in large numbers, but there are a certain number of them. If one always had liberty to give £500 or so for them they are to be got every now and then.

13252. Do you think you can find as good action in a thoroughbred horse as in any other breed?—I do, in individual ones. I do not say that the thoroughbred, taking him all round, is celebrated for his action—I mean as being the best in the world. Say this very horse we happen to have mentioned, "Erskine." I think he is quite as beautiful a mover as any Hackney I ever saw, because he moves with such elasticity, and his shoulders and every joint he has got are all action.

13253. Should you say that having procured "Erskine" or any other thoroughbred he is more likely to transmit his qualities than an animal that had not been so long bred on one particular line, the thoroughbred horse has been bred as a thoroughbred now for a large number of years?—More likely to transmit his action or his formation and general quality than a horse bred the same way that did not possess these qualities; he would be more likely to transmit his qualities in the direction that he is bred, but he would be less likely to breed the same action than a horse that had been bred for it. "Erskine" is a horse that I would recommend purely as a cross with a Hackney to produce action and quality. I would not recommend him as a cross with a thoroughbred for breeding hunter stallions for Ireland.

13254. I only said "Erskine" because you mentioned his name?—Yes, I mean a horse like "Royal Meath," you have got him in Ireland, crossed with thoroughbred mares, and their produce again crossed with a thoroughbred horse of equal size and substance; but in an establishment of the sort you would want to have more sires than one or you would have to have access to more than one sire, unless your mares were bought specially to suit that sire; there are certain mares that want mating to an entirely different class of stallion to what other mares would. I think that is one reason why we have been rather successful in Dorsetshire at the Compton Stud, in having six stallions we are enabled to a certain extent to get breeders to choose their stallions, and they all belong to the same stud, so there is no feeling that "I must go to so and so because he is a friend of mine," which is very often the case with a farmer, he puts his mare to a particular horse, not because it suits her but because the owner of the stallion is a relation of his wife's or something of that sort.

13255. You were talking about old mares being sometimes offered to you, do you approve of breeding from old mares?—I have known them to breed some very good stock.

13256. At what age do you begin breeding?—I have a very good mare that I rode until she saw

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twenty, and she has bred me two beautiful foals, but of course I would rather breed from young mares.

13257. Have you formed any idea of the best way of trying to induce the farmer in Ireland to keep his good mares in the country?—I should think there would be nothing better than subsidising the mares and registering them, getting owners to enter them in the book and to give them prizes or free services, we find it very beneficial.

13258. Would not subsidising be rather an expensive way?—Of course giving them a free service is subsidising them, I think if a man can get a free service it ought to be an inducement to him to keep a good mare instead of a bad one.

13259. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—In what way? Any man who registered his mare would you give him a free service?—Oh, no, no; we give ten free services every year in my country to the ten best mares; they are shown in competition and the ten best selected; they think a great deal more of the free service than if you gave them £2 10*s.*, the price of the service; this they would think nothing of.

13260. CHAIRMAN.—That is what you charge for the service?—Yes, and they think a lot of the free service, and will go to any trouble to send their mares to compete.

13261. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—But with limited means would you spend your money on the horse or on the mare?—I think the stallion is the direct way to do more benefit to the country, because he leaves more behind him, but you can always regulate your expenditure by giving these subsidies or free services, you can always regulate them the same as we have, you could allow ten free services in the country, or twenty or five according to your means, and that might be done perhaps at not very great cost, you might do a little of both.

13262. Lord RATHDONNELL.—You mentioned a certain class of stallion that, in your opinion, would suit the congested districts in Ireland, that is a stallion with two crosses of thoroughbreeding out of a Hackney mare; how many years would it take you to produce this stallion?—You would have a two-year-old after three years time, and you could put the two-year-old to the horse and have the animal into the world, in fact you could have it as a two-year old in six years' time.

13263. But breeding from two-year-olds?—Yes. There is nothing against breeding from two-year-olds, I have done it both in half-bred and thoroughbred stock.

13264. I understood that three-year-old was the year you thought best?—No, I have not been asked the question, I have given no evidence about the age.

13265. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—You said a three-year-old mare?—Yes, you buy a three-year-old mare to commence with.

13266. Lord RATHDONNELL.—That would be a Hackney mare?—Yes, or a two-year-old; if I was managing a stud I should breed from my two-year-olds; there is one condition you have got to observe about breeding from two-year-olds—if you breed from two-year-olds you must do your mares better, so I may very likely have mentioned three year olds; dealing, generally, with the farmers I don't think they ever do their mares well enough to breed from a two-year-old, I don't think they are sufficiently forward and well-fed.

13267. At the very earliest it would take six years?—Yes.

13268. Would you not have to keep a great number of mares in order to produce a certain number of stallions?—To do that in quantity, you would, supposing you started with a dozen mares.

13269. It would be rather a costly business and an experiment too?—It would be an experiment; and one I only recommend if it is decided to continue the introduction of Hackney blood in Ireland.

13270. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you think a small thoroughbred could be bought now for use in the congested districts?—I think so; there were several horses I noticed here, particularly "Chibiabos," "Erskine," and "First Flight II."—he would be a very nice horse for that purpose.

13271. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—Have you ever been in the congested districts?—No.

13272. Have you ever seen the class of mare that is there?—No, I have only taken it from description.

13273. Have you ever seen the class of horses they used there in their carts?—No; I have taken it for granted what Lord Dunraven told me, that they were well-bred small mares.

13274. Pony mares?—Yes.

13275. Do you think that a thoroughbred horse, however good his action, is likely to impart the same action as he has himself?—Oh, I think so.

13276. As much as a horse that has been bred for action for years?—No, certainly not; you could rely more on the action in the case you mention.

13277. Has it been your experience that if you breed from small half-bred mares, or nondescript bred mares, and put a thoroughbred on them—have you ever found that the result is a weedy sort of a useless description; you cannot use it for any good?—No; I have known some of the best hunters in the world bred from pony mares.

13278. Yes, Welsh pony mares; but these are little weedy mares. My experience of breeding from a thoroughbred horse and these mares in the north-west of Ireland is that you get an animal that is absolutely useless?—All depends on the stallion you use; this horse, "First Flight II.," took a premium, and he is made like a Hackney; but he is a thoroughbred and has got as good action as a Hackney.

13279. That is an exceptional horse?—Yes; but there are exceptional horses you can pick out of the stud book.

13280. What sort of a price could that horse be bought at?—I don't like to state in public what I think is the value. There was another horse there that answered the description, though not such a nice horse, "Touchwood"; he is just in the form of a Hackney, but he is thoroughbred—these are the horses I should like to send down now to the congested districts during the time that the others are being built up.

13281. Have you ever seen the stock of any of these?—No.

13282. You said you thought that subsidising the stallion was a better thing than subsidising the mares?—Yes; I think the benefit is larger.

13283. Have you any idea of the number of stallions in Ireland?—No. My idea is you would not subsidise every stallion you think suitable, but by giving a certain number of subsidies, it is not only the horse that wins the subsidy that is improved thereby, but it is the number of horses that are bought with a view of winning the subsidy. I see Irishmen over at Newmarket buying horses; they won't buy an unsound one as long as they think there is a chance of getting a premium. If you give them prizes in districts, it makes them try to buy good horses with a chance of winning—everybody that buys a horse in that district is buying with a view of winning £100 or £150 prize. The benefit is not confined to the one horse you subsidise in the district, for everybody who buys a horse in that district buys a good one, with the view of winning the subsidy.

13284. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—You say you have not used the Hackney in its present condition; you would require two crosses of the thoroughbred before you would introduce it into Ireland?—I think so, I would much prefer to use the thoroughbred horse, specially selected, like the horse that I have mentioned, "First Flight II."

13285. There are two classes with which you are acquainted, and there has been a certain discussion about them; one is the cavalry horse for the service.

Do you think that the Hackney, as it is at present, would be any improvement to that class?—I think it would be a very bad course, because I think that the Hackney has soft blood, and I don't think the Hackneys are riding horses, I think they are purely harness horses.

13286. Do you think the action and conformation of the Hackney would be suitable for the cavalry horse?—No, I think it would be the reverse. I think it would not do for long marches. I think they would not go half the distance that the animals got by thoroughbreds out of the mares of the country would, I am perfectly sure of that.

13287. Do you think their shoulders would carry a saddle as well?—I don't think they would.

13288. Another question has arisen with regard to the breeding of those ponies for polo ponies, which you have great experience in. Do you think the cross of the Hackney would be likely to assist in breeding valuable ponies for this?—I don't think it would; in fact, I am sure it would not. The cross of the horse I have mentioned, "First Flight II.", would, if they come small, they would make polo ponies; if bigger, riding or driving horses, good for any purpose. The cross of the Hackney would be useful for harness horses only, and the competition in harness horses is now so strong that it will be very much better to breed with a view of breeding riding horses than it would with the view of breeding driving horses, which are imported so largely from abroad.

13289. I understood you to say you would put no restriction on the farmers in getting rid of their stock. You practically mean that the foreign demand creates the supply in the breeding?—I do; yes.

13290. What class of stallions is most used by the farmers in England?—The bigger. In breeding hunters and horses generally the best breeders all use the thoroughbred, but the farmer who does not take very much trouble about it, and lets things go, breeds to the nearest horse and is very apt to put a mare that might breed a nice hunter—a well-bred mare—to a cart-horse, or to put her to a Hackney or a coach horse or some blood that is not suitable to breed saleable horses, instead of putting her to a thoroughbred. I have seen brood mares in hunter classes at the shows that have been in foal to cart-horses—mares that would really breed good horses if mated to the thoroughbred. I cannot help thinking that the cart-horse has a great deal more to do with breeding of hunters than we realize. All those that the last witness has just mentioned about Devonshire were such—the old pack mare has gone through crossing with the Clydesdale. It is the same thing in Northumberland and other counties that were celebrated for their small class of cart-mare. All these countries that were celebrated for that class of cart-mare have been in olden times the most celebrated for breeding hunters. There is an idea it is impossible to breed horses except on certain land; I have known thoroughbred stock bred on all sorts of land—on heavy clay. But I think where you have light land the farmers are enabled to do their farm work with a lighter description of cart-horses, the light cart mare, or what we should call the van mare, was therefore available to cross with the thoroughbred, and in olden days when the big cart-horse was not so much thought of as he is now, and where the light mares and cart-horses existed, better hunters were bred than on the heavy land where the bigger cart-horses were required. I think cart-horses have really a great deal more influence in hunter-breeding than we usually think.

13290A. You judged the hunter mares at the Dublin show. Do you know were any of them covered by Hackneys?—I am sorry to say some of them were, and I put in my report to the Society—that some of the hunter mares exhibited in the hunter class were covered by Hackney stallions. The mares were very unsuitable to mate with Hackney stallions.

13291. You were speaking of the American horses and of their great influx; of their pulling down the value of the medium class of horses in this country. Have you formed any opinion or do you know anything about the relative value—or capabilities rather—of the American horses of that description with the horses bred in England?—Oh, I believe they are good horses. They have been brought up hard and that sort of thing; they are hard useful horses for general work.

13292. And a horse of equal capability can be bought as an American now cheaper than a home-bred one—or rather they put the home-bred prices down?—Yes. Looking at this importation from a military point of view, I think the importation of these cheap horses as they are is a weakness to our country. When talking of prohibiting the export of mares, I think it would be a far greater strength to our country if we prohibit the import of horses, for in case of war, we would be liable to have this supply, which we are now depending on, cut off; whereas if there were no importation, the people of this country would be themselves breeding horses, and these would be ready to hand in case of war. The more we become dependent on the foreign supply, the more awkward the position we would occupy if that supply were cut off and there were no people at home to supply that demand which had been hitherto supplied from abroad.

13293. That is practically a serious question. You would not place restrictions on the outlet because it creates the supply; but you would try and stop the inlet because it brings prices down to such an extent that people here would give up breeding?—Yes, exactly so. I would prohibit import from a breeding as well as from a military point of view. The more we export the greater our strength, because we could stop exportation in case of war, and we should have all the animals available as an extra supply for our country. The better the market the more horses will be bred in the country.

13294. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Have you had any experience of breeding from the Hackney with either thoroughbred mares or hunter mares?—No, I have not. I should think that the cross of the Hackney on the thoroughbred mare itself might be likely to produce a nice animal—might produce a riding or a driving horse.

13295. Have you not seen any animals bred that way?—No; I don't think I have.

13296. You heard the evidence of the last witness with regard to the endurance of the Hackney. Your impression is that they are soft?—Yes.

13297. What is your experience that leads you to imagine that they are soft? Have you ever ridden or driven them?—Well, in the first place, my observation is that their action never could go on for long distances; it must tire the animal; it is not an easy action. In the second place, from what I have seen and heard of them, from my friends who have had them—there is one thing the last witness said I should have liked to ask him about; you know, of course, that certain of the Hackneys do contain a great deal of the thoroughbred blood—I should like very much to know the pedigree of that particular horse that he has given us information on.

Lord ENNISKILLEN.—It was by "Gentleman," dam "Phenomenon."

13298. Mr. WRENCH.—It was by "Gentleman," dam "Quicksilver," and "Quicksilver" was a horse with a good deal of thoroughbred blood.

Witness.—That is the notion I jumped at without being told anything about the pedigree. I thought the Hackney he was speaking of contained a certain amount of thoroughbred blood, as he spoke of the endurance of his stock.

13299. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Of recent thoroughbred blood?—They throw back a great many generations, but the Hackneys that have a quantity of thoroughbred blood in them will be much more likely to produce enduring animals than animals without it.

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13300. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—You said you have no experience in breeding Hackneys, but have you had them in your own stable to test endurance?—No, but my friends have.

13301. Then you speak merely from hearsay?—From reliable hearsay—from friends of mine who have had the animals and driven them.

13302. You have recommended experiment to be tried of Hackney mares with thoroughbred horses?—No, I don't recommend the experiment to be tried; I recommend the Hackney mares with thoroughbred horses.

13303. I said so; and you don't think the same result would come from a Hackney sire and a thoroughbred mare?—It might, to a certain extent, but the reason I don't suggest it is this, that if you were to commence by getting thoroughbred mares and getting Hackney stallions your stallions would be serving mares of the country which, I think, would be doing harm. If you take the Hackney mares they will not cross with the mares of the country—they will do no harm; if you take the mares to Ireland and mate them with a thoroughbred horse, he can serve other mares as well as the Hackney mares he is taken there to serve specially.

13304. You have never taken the trouble to post yourself up as to the breeding of the Hackneys—to see the origin of them, and the proportion of blood on the dam's side?—I have noticed that there is one very celebrated horse that throws back to "Kitty."

13305. Mr. WRENCH.—"Rufus"?—Yes, it was bred over and over again to "Kitty"—tremendous in-breeding. "Kitty" is out of a thoroughbred.

13306. By "Tamworth"?—Exactly, he is a thoroughbred horse.

13307. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Have you had an experience in buying carriage horses or driving horses in London, and of learning from the various dealers information as to the style of animals they have, and the prices that they ask?—No; I have not done that, but I know that they import a tremendous lot of horses from the Continent—very good showy carriage horses that fetch very long prices—a great quantity of them.

13308. Don't you think there is plenty of room to breed in England, or in the United Kingdom, horses of that sort without going abroad; taking the great name we have of being celebrated for our breeds, that we should not keep up the breeding of these horses?—Yes; but the way I should do it would be to improve the Hackney; I think the Hackney wants more thoroughbred blood in him. It is not for me to dictate to the Hackney Society, but I should say that that is what the Hackneys want, more stamina, more quality, and more lightness of action, which would enable them to go through longer journeys with less exertion to themselves. And I think that that might be produced by infusing a greater quantity of thoroughbred blood into the Hackneys. I think it would be a great advantage; they would then be a sort of riding horse as well as a better class of driving horse.

13309. You say you have no experience with regard to driving is to the suitability of Hackney crossed with thoroughbred, but that you expect that from the cross of the Hackney with the thoroughbred hunter mare a breed of horses suitable for driving might be bred, the Hackneys themselves having a considerable quantity of thoroughbred blood already in them?—I think if you put them to the thoroughbred mare you might breed some very nice animals, because you would be doing exactly what I would like to see, mixing the thoroughbred blood with the Hackney. But I think that putting the Hackney on coarse mares you would be breeding clumsy soft animals.

13310. From your experience are horses like "Yardarm" mated with big thoroughbred mares likely to produce a stunted breed of thoroughbreds, and are you aware that the late Lord Glasgow met with no encouragement to continue on breeding such thoroughbred stock, as horses of that size were believed not to be suitable for racing purposes?—Yes, he tried it, which shows and proves that a big powerful class of thoroughbred horses can be produced, but he found exactly what I said and what I found myself and what I know to be the case, that if you want to breed racehorses you must not breed horses of that description too coarse and clumsy; you want to breed something more active, he tried it and he failed. I think that the experiment he tried proved that such horses could be produced by careful mating, and I think such horses would be of great value to mate to mares for breeding hunters, provided they were mated to well-bred mares and not to coarse mares. I don't think "Yardarm" is a suitable horse to put on a cart mare, a half cart mare or a common mare; you would get a very clumsy brute. You want a good mare or thoroughbred mare, and then you will get something of size and quality combined.

13311. You have frequently judged at the Dublin Shows. Do you think any benefit would accrue if a little more information could be given of the breeding of the various animals that are sold there?—You mean information placed on the catalogue, I think so. I think I noticed on the catalogues at the last show that full information of the pedigrees was not always given. I think it would be a great improvement that it should be. We have an instance also in the Hunters' Improvement Society this year of the prize horse. The reason this occurred in our own show was because the breeder of the animal was unknown, and we don't accept the pedigree of the animal unless the breeder is known. I think that would be a very feasible thing, and I think you see some instances of that in the Dublin catalogue where the breeder is not given and the pedigree is given. If the breeder is not given you can't know the pedigree. And that really was the case in the class for Irish hunter brood mares, the particular class in the show last year. I think there were some thirteen or more mares there, and in only a very few instances, three or four I think, could any particulars be obtained at all.

13312. Don't you think it would be very important to know something of their pedigrees?—It is very important to know them if they can be obtained, but there are instances in which they buy mares out of a drove and that sort of thing—instances in which they are unable to obtain information of who is the breeder, and if they cannot obtain the information it is better not to put it in at all than to put it in merely by hearsay.

13313. Mr. WRENCH.—When you talk of crossing Hackney mares with a thoroughbred horse do you think Hackney mares in their conformation have any special qualification for brood mares?—I do, to mate with a thoroughbred horse.

13314. You think they are of the right stamp and shape?—To mate with the thoroughbred but not with the coarse horse.

13315. If you knew that in the Hackneys that have been imported into Ireland there was a good deal of thoroughbred blood in the same way as the horse that was alluded to to-day, would that lessen your objection to them to have several crosses of thoroughbred blood back?—No, I mean these horses I am recommending.

13316. I am not talking of these horses. If in the Hackneys imported into Ireland you knew there were several crosses of thoroughbred blood would that at all lessen your objection or would you prefer them to be horses with no cross of blood?—Certainly, the more blood the better.

13317. You would not object so much to them if you knew they had thoroughbred blood in them?—My objection would be to want of action. We have got to go through all this catalogue here to get some four or five stallions with the particular action I would recommend as a cross to mate with a Hackney. If you find a suitable horse he will impart his goodness to twenty or thirty mares, but if you had to find

thirty thoroughbred mares with this action, you would have far greater difficulty in doing it than by introducing it from a horse.

13318. I was not quite so much on that question as on the question as to whether if you found in the Hackneys imported into Ireland there was a large admixture of thoroughbred blood you would object to them so much as you would do if they had no thoroughbred blood at all?—It would go better; the more blood there is in the mare the nearer they would approach to a suitable cross.

13319. When you talk of taking a thoroughbred horse to mate with Hackney mares do you think he would reproduce action in the same way that a Hackney would reproduce action?—Certainly not.

13320. Do you know that the Hackney action is absolutely natural, and that even the Hackney foals go in a different way to thoroughbred foals?—Certainly.

13321. Do you think that action in a small undersized harness horse is a saleable commodity?—Yes, certainly.

13322. Therefore, in a district, say, where they could only breed that class of horse and don't attempt to breed hunters, would action be one of the things that would help them to sell the produce?—It would be one of the things, but the coarseness and softness of the Hackney blood would go against the extreme action, and therefore I should prefer to introduce the thoroughbred blood with action and splendid conformation, where you would get both riding and driving horses, and would have your animals suitable to sell for both purposes.

13323. Can softness and coarseness come in in any way except from cart horse blood?—Certainly, it would come from Hackneys, I should think.

13324. Where does the soft blood come in in the Hackneys; take the Yorkshire Hackney. Do you know how they are bred?—I have not gone into that, but I know they are soft.

13325. That is your statement, but where does the soft blood come in? They were bred from old roadsters, who did long distances?—It may be in the way they were brought up. If you get horses to step from one show ring to another, and bottled up so as to step high you soften them. They would lose half of that action if regularly used.

13326. How long would it take to disappear, do you think?—It might disappear in a certain number of generations if they were brought up naturally. But just as the last witness stated, these ponies in the mountains for years would endure the climate and hardships; these Hackneys have been brought up so much for show purposes that that may be the cause of their softness.

13327. You cannot express any opinion as to the produce of the Hackneys as suited to the hardships of life in the West of Ireland?—No.

13328. When you talk of breeding horses in Ireland, I think you don't allude to Ulster?—No; I allude to no particular district.

13329. I think your idea of horse-breeding is that you leave the people free to sell their mares without restriction?—Certainly.

13330. If people in a certain district find it pays them better to breed any particular class of horse, would you stop them doing it. Suppose in Ulster they found it better to breed harness horses from the conditions of the country, and their own condition, would you say they should be encouraged to breed hunters?—I think for the benefit of Ireland generally, it would be better to have the same rule in Ireland as in Guernsey and Jersey. But that could not be entertained; and, therefore, I should certainly not interfere, but let the people breed what they like in their own private enterprise.

13331. When you talk of the benefit of Ireland generally, do you mean the greater number of people or the richer people, or who do you mean?—Ireland has got a name as being the country in the world to breed hunters, and I think it should maintain that reputation. Once you get the cart-horse blood, the Hackney blood and the Cleveland blood into the country, they will deteriorate your hunters. The less of these breeds you have in Ireland the better will be the reputation the country will get as being the best country in the world to produce hunters.

13332. Excluding Hackneys, do you know that one-third of the stallions in Ireland are cart horse blood or half-cart blood?—I don't know the exact proportion, but I know that there is a certain number of them in Ireland, and I should think that it is very much against the reputation of the country that they are there. I think it would be very much better if big thoroughbred horses were provided, and prizes given them. There is no doubt the little thoroughbred horse will get some of the most symmetrical animals out of big well-bred mares, but I think that we want to encourage big thoroughbred horses.

13333. You don't know that we have had it in evidence before us that, for 100 years or more, premiums have been given by the Dublin Society for strong horses?—Shire horses?

13334. Not shire horses—plough horses, black Flemish horses originally?—I haven't heard that.

13335. In spite of all that alloy in Irish blood, Ireland has maintained its reputation for breeding hunters?—Oh, yes; it is a reputation that will take a great many years to shake. Of course it might go down, and down, and down, until it does lose its reputation.

13336. If it pays to breed these good hunters, the people would do so?—Yes; but many people are very ignorant and breed them by chance. Provide them with a cart horse or a Hackney, and tell them it is a good thing, and they measure him and say, "He has got so much bone below the knee," and they are very apt to be misguided. As a rule, the people who know most about hunters are those who buy them from the small breeders—the small breeders in England (in Ireland, they know more) know very little about it. The fact of a particular horse under the auspices of Government being sent round to serve hunter mares makes all the small breeders in the country rush to him; that would not prove it was a good selection or was right. The little breeders who know little go for the coarse blood; it does not matter what you send them—if you give them something with what they think is bulk they will go for it.

13337. Do you know what result the premium horses in England are having? Is the demand for the service of premium horses in England increasing or falling off?—I cannot tell you.

13338. There are statistics to show?—Yes.

13339. Published by the Hunters' Improvement Society?—No; by the Royal Commission.

13340. Would you object, as a chance-cross, more to cart horse blood in hunters, or to Hackney blood in hunters that had a considerable proportion of thoroughbred crosses?—I would rather have the Hackney with the considerable proportion of thoroughbred crosses than the cart horse.

13341. You know at present all sound thoroughbred stallions in Ireland have the opportunity of being registered?—Yes.

13342. And you know that since that register started there has been a decrease in the number of thoroughbred stallions?—Is there?

13343. Presumably you would think a register of that kind would be good in getting rid of unsound stallions?—I think it is a very good thing.

13344. You would not be inclined to go further than a register like that?—No, I would not make it compulsory. I would not have taking out licences; I would leave it as it is—it is having excellent results.

13345. Do you know a number of American horses have been sold as Irish hunters?—I believe so.

13346. That would be a great detriment to the hunter trade?—Yes.

13347. It has been suggested that the American horses should be branded in some way?—Certainly; it would be a very good thing.

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13348. You think it would help the breeders?—I think so, certainly; I think it would prevent imposition.

13349. When you talk of breeding thoroughbreds as sires and not for racing purposes—do you think if such horses were bred there would be a good demand for them from foreign Governments?—Oh, yes; there would be. But then if they were bred by a Government stud, of course they would not allow them to go to foreign Governments; they would sell them or let them, on the conditions that they were never to leave the country.

13350. But still they would be a marketable commodity?—Certainly.

13351. And saleable at paying prices?—Yes.

13352. Do you think it is possible now to buy horses in any number that would do good to Ireland—thoroughbred horses at from £150 to £200 each?—Well, I should like a higher limit than that; I might buy one to-morrow for £50, but I should like a limit of £500.

13353. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—An average?—No, a limit. I should be liable to go to £500. I think you would do more good by buying one first class horse if you paid £1,000, than if you bought ten you gave £100 a piece for, for these would be no better than there are in Ireland already.

13354. Mr. WRENCH.—When you talk of some of the mares in the Dublin Show being in foal to a Hackney sire, you don't say they came from the congested districts?—If they were, my idea of the animals of the congested districts is different from what I have been led to understand.

13355. These were fine mares?—Yes.

13356. You don't know the stallion?—No.

13357. Was it more than one mare?—I think there were two.

13358. You reported it to the Dublin Society?—I mentioned it in my report.

13359. When you talk of shoulders, what do you consider the great requisites in a horse's shoulders?—Slope and the placing of the forelegs, which is far more important really than anything.

13360. The placing of the forelegs and slope?—And slope combined.

13361. You think that Hackneys are deficient in slope?—I think they are chiefly in fault in loadedness of the shoulders which makes them roll in their action.

13362. You are speaking chiefly from what you see in the shows?—Yes; and the placing of the forelegs. I mean in measuring length of shoulder; there is no use measuring it from the point to the back, it should be guided really from where the foreleg goes in. If a horse had a great prominent chest you must not measure it in with the shoulder to show the slope.

13363. The shoulder blade?—Yes, but the shoulder blade really extends into the breast. You should measure from where his arms go in.

13364. You would not object to use in any part of Ireland where they produce a mercantile animal a horse with, say, Hackney blood with two crosses of thoroughbred blood?—I don't think it would do much harm, but it would not breed the best hunters.

13365. I am not talking of hunters?—I think it would do good; of course the sires that I should recommend, supposing in the first instance you were to send thoroughbred sires, specially chosen, to go down to the congested districts you would choose rather a different stamp of horse to send down now to what you would choose to mate with the Hackney mares to produce a stallion. For instance, the sort of horse I should send to the congested districts would be a horse—"First Flight II.": he is like a Hackney, but is a thoroughbred horse, and has got greater sharpness and quality, the very things the Hackneys want. But to produce these animals, to choose a horse to mate on a Hackney mare, I should prefer "Erskine," because he has got more liberty but not so much substance.

13366. But when you say a Hackney mare is a suitable shape as a brood mare to cross with a thoroughbred horse, is it not possible that mares got by a Hackney stallion may not also grade up to animals suitable to cross with thoroughbred horses out of a thoroughbred mare?—It depends upon how many crosses.

13367. I mean a very well-bred mare. If you say a Hackney is the right shape as a brood mare, may not a mare got by a Hackney be of the right shape as a brood mare?—It might, but it won't have the blood; I am recommending it as second cross.

13368. I am talking of the country itself. Supposing you have to deal with a lot of weedy, well-bred mares in a poor district you cross with Hackneys, and may not that grade up these animals?—You might grade up, but you do a great deal of harm in the meantime. The Hackney stallions would be infusing their blood into animals that would breed horses for riding purposes.

13369. Have you heard it suggested that there should be a general registration of horses in Ireland?—No; I have not heard that.

13370. That all horses should be registered with the Petty Sessions Clerks?—You mean all sires?

13371. Everything, so that it would be possible for any buyer to trace the pedigree?—I think it would be an excellent thing. It is done here, to a certain extent. It should be done all over the country.

13372. Don't you think Ireland practically is the best country in the world for producing horses?—Yes.

13373. If it is, would it not be worth while for the State to spend some money in registration of that kind?—Certainly.

13374. If a registration of that kind were adopted of course it would then be practically possible to trace the pedigree of every horse?—Yes, it would be a very great advantage.

13375. Therefore those people who don't wish Shire, Clydesdale, or Hackney blood could avoid having any?—Yes; they could do so, but if you place horses that are unsuitable before small people who don't study, and who don't know much about it, they will send to any new toy. There is always a greater run on the new horse, because it is a new horse.

13376. With poor farmers the chief thing is what they can get?—Yes.

13377. So that that will soon cure itself?—Yes, but they don't know till they have tried it.

13378. Would you interfere with their choice then?—I should never interfere with their choice.

13379. You would give them a choice between?—No; I should only spend public money on the purchase of the thoroughbred that we know for certain does succeed. I have no objection to the two crosses of the thoroughbred being tried on the Hackney mare. I think you would breed an animal that would get some very good riding and driving animals.

13380. You would not object to horses got out of a thoroughbred mare by a Hackney stallion?—It depends upon what sort is the thoroughbred mare, and what you want her for.

13381. Would you object to use an animal as a sire that had been bred out of a good thoroughbred mare by a Hackney stallion, with some thoroughbred blood in him?—What do you want to produce?

13382. To produce a horse with action?—I should want to know what sort of a thoroughbred mare it was out of.

13383. A mare with action?—Well, if you can get a mare with as good action as "Erskine," and put it to a Hackney stallion, it would be a very good beginning. Put the produce to a thoroughbred horse, and then you would be all right.

13384. Have you formed any opinion as to whether action comes most from the sire or the dam?—No; I never particularly observed that.

13385. You don't know the Hungarian government at one time tried subsidising mares and gave it up,

and only subsidise stallions now?—Yes, I am in favour of subsidising stallions. I think if you subsidise one stallion he produces 30 or 40 animals every year, while if you subsidise one mare it only produces one animal.

13386. Do you think there is anything practical in the suggestion of buying mares and distributing them to the people?—I think it would be a costly business, and would not produce as much fruit as would giving them free services.

13387. The game would not be worth the candle? I think free services given to those with good mares in the country would have a better effect.

13388. CHAIRMAN.—I think you said you are not in favour of restricting people as regards selling their mares, but you are in favour of offering them inducements to keep them?—Yes.

13389. As to compulsory registration I understood from you that you don't approve of compulsory registration?—Well, I rather understood you to mean your question to refer to compulsory registration of stallions.

13390. I meant it to apply to everything?—I think that would be an excellent thing if you could put it in force.

13391. You don't know how many cart horse stallions there are in Ireland, or where they are?—No.

13392. Or anything about these cart mares and stallions which were introduced into Ireland 130 years ago?—No.

13393. In your opinion if there are many heavy cart horse sires in Ireland is it a pity?—I think it is a pity; and I should presume that the cart horses that are talked about of a great many years ago were of the lighter and not the heavy description of cart horses, Ireland being a light country to till. I don't know whether that is so, but I presume it is likely to have been so.

13394. In some parts of Ireland of course they require heavier horses for their agricultural purposes, trams and so on. In the north for instance would you object to the Clydesdale sire?—I think the less there is of him the better.

13395. Would you equally object to the old Yorkshire coach horse or the Cleveland?—No; I would rather have the Cleveland or the coach horse than the cart horse. There have been some very good-looking horses and good hunters bred out of the Cleveland mares by the cross with the thoroughbred horse, but it is always considered soft blood, and it is soft blood.

13396. Generally speaking I gather your opinion is that producing hunters in Ireland is profitable and likely to continue so because there is not so much danger to be apprehended from foreign competition in that line; and that as Ireland has succeeded very well in that direction it would be a pity and probably detrimental to the horse-breeding industry, as a whole, if anything was done which might gradually cause a deterioration in the quality and quantity of the hunters produced?—Yes, I think it would; I think it would be a great thing to keep up the individuality for which the country is celebrated. I think the introduction of the two crosses from the Hackney would perhaps do no harm for breeding ponies and hacks and that sort of thing.

13397. That is a suitable thoroughbred sire on the suitable Hackney mare?—Yes, two crosses of the thoroughbred sire on the Hackney mare for the congested districts. If a few mares did get covered by him it would be no harm; threeparts out of four would be thoroughbred.

13398. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You say at the present moment the Irish hunter is the very best in the world?—Yes.

13399. Why has Ireland got that great name?—I think from its blood, and I think also from the small holdings in Ireland. It is a light country to till, and the people keep the one mare and her three-year and her two-year-old do the work of the farm. I think breeding has been more carried on as a practice there than elsewhere, and the soil being suitable to it has encouraged people to do it success-fully. I think the whole country and the nature of the holdings has been conducive to breeding hunters, and it has been carried on successfully. Things are cheaper there also; they can rear a three year old cheaper in Ireland than in England; hay is cheaper and everything of that sort. It is all conducive to breeding hunters.

13400. You think the introduction of any new breed would damage the prestige that Ireland already has?—I think so. I think it is better to do one thing properly than two things badly; it is better to stick to what you know is successful. I think if you were living in Norfolk or the East Riding of Yorkshire, I should recommend any one to breed Hackneys for there are Hackneys all round. If I were a farmer living there I would breed Hackneys; I should have a greater selection of stallions. Foreigners come there to buy, and there is a market for them. If you go in for a breed which is not a speciality in the country, buyers don't look for that particular class of animal, and you don't find as many opportunities of producing them with as much success as when you happen to have the breed of the country.

13401. Do you think you have improved in Dorsetshire by the aid of thoroughbred blood?—We certainly have.

13402. Knowing the value and the reputation which horse-breeding in Ireland has as an industry you think no care on the part of the government can be too great not to do anything that might damage its prestige —I do certainly.

13403. You said Lord Glasgow had failed in the matter of horse-breeding for racing purposes; they may have failed but they were fine specimens of the animal.

Sir WALTER GILBEY.—The question I asked was that at Lord Glasgow's sale the prices realised would seem to show it was a failure.

Witness.—I always understood and I speak more from hearsay than anything else that of course it took him some time to breed up what he was specially wishing to breed, namely, big weight-carrying horses, and I was always under the impression they didn't meet with the success as racehorses in proportion to the numbers that he bred that they would otherwise have done if he had stuck to breeding more moderate-sized animals.

13404. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—He was a very eccentric man I think in racing, and he almost invariably kept to his own particular breed?—Yes.

13405. Lord RATHDONNELL.—From your answers to Mr. Wrench, am I right in thinking you consider it most unfortunate that cart horse blood has been introduced into Ireland and that you would rather not introduce any more soft blood by having Hackney stallions over there?—Certainly.

13406. CHAIRMAN.—I suppose you would not propose to restrict the liberty of an individual to have any kind of stallion he liked?—Certainly not, you could not do that.

13407. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Or you would not stifle private enterprise in any way?—Certainly not; you must let the private individual do what he likes.

Viscount EBRINGTON examined.

13408. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Devonshire?—I do.

13409. New South Molton?—Yes seven miles from there.

13410. You were once master of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds?—Yes, for six years, '81 to '87.

13411. You know all the Exmoor country?—Yes, pretty well.

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13412. And the breed of ponies?—Yes.

13413. Is it a large tract of country in which these Exmoor ponies are bred?—Well, the true Exmoor ponies are only bred by Sir Thomas Acland, but the Exmoor type of pony is bred in all the Devon and Somerset country, right away to Barnstaple in all the hilly country. In all the hill country there they breed ponies which are more or less of the Exmoor type and Exmoor blood.

13414. How have they been bred?—Anyhow—the great part of them anyhow. Sir Thomas Acland for the last twenty-five years has taken a lot of trouble with his ponies; he keeps the breed pure, and takes the best mares with their suckers down to Kellerton, near Exeter, every year and keeps the young ones there. They go down there as soon as they can travel with the mare, and the sucker will remain there until it is nearly two years old and then it goes back to the hills. In that way he has improved the shape and the size of these ponies very much. There are some farmers round about who do take trouble with their ponies and know their pedigrees and keep up their own sort, but to a great extent they have been bred in a very haphazard sort of way.

13415. You don't exactly know what the alloy consists of?—The Master of the Stag hounds has had for years past at least one thoroughbred horse, and they cover a certain number of ponies; I had a Hackney horse for two years and he had a certain number of ponies; Mr. Bassett, who succeeded me, had a Hackney horse for three or four years and he covered a certain number of ponies; I had two Arabs at different times; Sir Frederick Knight has had an Arab for several years past, and many years ago his father had a Dongola horse.

13416. That is a long way to go for a horse?—It was an experiment.

13417. What does Sir Thomas Acland use?—He keeps to his own ponies.

13418. Exmoor ponies?—Yes; pure Exmoor ponies.

13419. You have crossed them with the thoroughbred, the Hackney, and the Arab?—I can't say that I have personally. The only pony I ever bred from was one who had already a cross of thoroughbred blood.

13420. You have experience of the produce?—Yes.

13421. And which do you prefer?—It depends on what you want so much. I have known some extraordinarily good ponies with one cross of thoroughbred blood; and a second cross of thoroughbred blood very often answers very well. A pony got by my Hackney took first prize as an Exmoor pony at Plymouth, Exeter, and other shows although it was no more an Exmoor pony than a cab horse, only that it was bred on the borders of Exmoor and was a very smart pony. The Hackneys give them style and action and are apt to improve their shoulders and get some very useful ponies.

13422. What kind of prices do the farmers get for the ponies they breed?—I have made inquiries of the two principal auctioneers. A great many ponies are sold every year at Bampton fair. One auctioneer sold 100 suckers and 40 other ponies. The suckers on an average realised £2 18*s.* 6*d.*; 20 yearlings £6 5*s.* each, and a pair of unbroken four-year-olds £22 10*s.* Evans, that auctioneer, is of opinion that the prices at Bampton fair are rather low: as a rule the best classes don't go there, and he says they maintain their value. He has just sent a truck of ponies to Maidstone and they averaged £17 18*s.* Another auctioneer sold as many as seventy suckers, and they averaged from £4 14*s.* for a lot of five belonging to a man on Exmoor, to £2 17*s.* 9*d.* He sold 220 in all, and his opinion is that the demand is not as strong as it was in former years.

13423. Not so much demand?—No.

13424. What are they used for?—The suckers are mostly bought by dairymen and tradesmen in a small way, not much by gentlemen, and a certain number of them go across to your country for use in the mines. Older ponies are bought by dealers who take them to Reading and Brighton and Chichester: a few go to Broadmoor and a few to the New Forest.

13425. Are any of them turned into polo ponies?—The Exmoor pony is too small for that: the true Exmoor pony is under twelve hands. Sir Thomas Acland's ponies don't certainly exceed twelve hands. By crossing with the thoroughbred you would get them up in size a bit.

13426. You don't know whether they have ever been bred at all specially for the purpose of polo ponies?—A number of polo ponies have been bought in North Devon at different times. I know some of them have turned out very well indeed, and at our Hunt Horse Show this year we had an innovation. We had classed ponies entirely by height, and this year we had a class for children's ponies and a class for ponies likely to make polo ponies and so on, and there was a considerable number of entries for the polo pony class.

13427. Lord Enniskillen.—Were they bred in the country?—Yes; they had to be the property of farmers living within twenty miles of the Kennels, and we define farmers as strictly as we can and keep the show entirely to farmers.

13428. Chairman.—How long have you had that show?—It has been going on for thirteen years. I started it first when I kept stallions as Master of the Hounds, and I thought I would try and get a better class of mare. We began in a very small way offering small prizes to brood mares. Then they got up a subscription in the Hunt and they asked me to get up a general show, and now we have a very successful show in the same way every year.

13429. Could you give us any particulars of the show?—That is the list of prizes we offered last year (produced), and I put in the margin the number of entries in each class.

13430. Read them?—The first class was for the best mare with foal at foot calculated for agricultural purposes; there were only six entries, although we offered £10 in prizes. The second class was for brood mares not exceeding 13 hands, with foal at foot. There were seven entries and the prizes amounted to £3 10*s.* There was a class for breeding mares not exceeding 14.2 hands, and in this there were seven entries, the prizes being £7 10*s.* In the class for mares calculated to breed hunters with foal at foot there were seven entries, prizes £16. Then we had three prizes for cart horses which never fill well there; I think partly owing to the time of the year in which they are all at hard work and not in show condition. We give a prize for the carter whose horse looks best. A class for the best child's pony not under three years old, not exceeding 13 hands, really quiet, and to be ridden by boys and girls not over 14 years, and in this there were twenty entries. For geldings or mares calculated for riding or driving not exceeding 14.2 there were twenty entries. For ponies calculated to make polo ponies there were twenty-six entries; there was an extra prize of £2 given in that for the best pony, the property of a small farmer; this was not very successful. Then we had prizes for pony stallions £5 and £2 10*s.*, in which class we had three entries; we have had that class for the last three years and it has not been a success. We never had more than three or four entries, and they are not very good ponies. They don't take the trouble to fetch them up off the hills for the purpose of bringing them in. The pony that won two years was one I bred myself by a thoroughbred horse out of a very good pony, but the horse was not a good one and the pony was not of very much account. Still the pony was good enough to win the prize two years running. I sold him as a two-year old because I didn't like to keep him. We had a class for the best weight-carrying cob not exceeding 15 hands high, thirteen entries. Class for two-year-olds, 15 entries. Class for three-year-olds, 8 entries.

Class for four-year-olds, 13 entries. All the preceding classes were strictly limited to farmers. We had two classes which were open to subscribers to hunts for light-weight and heavy-weight horses not less than five years old, open both to farmers and subscribers to the hunt. There were seven heavy and twenty-five light-weight horses exhibited. Then there were a couple of jumping prizes. On the whole we gave £124 in prizes.

13431. Did the classes with the exception of the stallion classes fill pretty well?—Oh, yes. Some years we had rather more entries than others. Last year we gave £37 for brood mares, and £27 10*s.* for two, three, and four-year olds.

13432. What kind of horse do they use about you for agricultural purposes?—Well, they used to have a very good class of cart mare indeed—a class of pack horse. But they are hardly to be found in the country now, and they have been crossed with inferior Shire horses and big horses of all sorts. They went in to try and breed big cart horses for which the country is not suitable; and the country is a bad country to work big horses in, and the cart mares are inferior animals in type.

13433. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Are these small cart ponies bred in that country suitable for the agricultural purposes of the country?—Oh, yes; they do the farmers' work, they are strong enough for that but they are poor shaped things. Not a good class to breed from.

13434. But they are sufficiently strong to do the work, it is mainly a grass country?—Mainly; but they have to till a good deal of turnips for sheep, and oats, &c.

13435. Is that good land?—Hilly, light land, you must have a light active cart horse.

13436. Mr. WRENCH.—When you alluded to the class of weight-carrying cobs, do you know how they were bred?—It is the first time we had a class for weight-carrying cobs. The first was by a thoroughbred horse, the second I don't know about, the next was by an Arab, not a very good Arab either. He was a horse that was bought by Sir Frederick Knight at Tattersalls; he had been an officer's charger in the Egyptian war. He bought him for a very low price, but the horse got some very good stock. Two of the class were by this Arab, another was by "Tomahawk," another by a thoroughbred horse, another by a Hackney, another the same, a third by a sort of Hackney—between a Hackney and a light cart horse. Three were by the Arab and most of the rest by thoroughbreds.

13437. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—Which won?—Well, I havn't got a marked catalogue.

13438. Mr. WRENCH.—You don't know what kind of mares they were bred out of?—I should think most of them were bred out of cob mares.

13439. With some cart blood in them?—Yes, I should think so; probably some of them were between a light cart horse and a pony. I think one of the Arab cobs got a prize.

13440. Had you a Hackney stallion yourself long?—For two years.

13441. Yorkshire or Norfolk?—I can only tell you his pedigree. He was by the "Gentleman" by "Quicksilver," dam by "Phenomenon" by "Cambridge Shales."

13442. He was a Norfolk horse?—A very good horse. I used to drive him backwards and forwards between my home and the Kennels, sixteen miles of a bad road, and drove him hundreds of miles. He was very hard indeed, and used to go there and back in a day.

13443. Would he lose his action when he went about a mile?—No.

13444. Didn't want the whip much?—No, he had very high courage and pluck.

13445. What was the result of his stock?—That is rather difficult to say, because they all turned out pretty well, and they were all sold away as three-year-olds.

13446. Did they sell as well as the produce of the other animals, or better?—I think so; there are hardly any mares of his get in the country.

13447. They were sold?—Yes.

13448. Because they were marketable?—Yes.

13449. Not because they were bad?—No, I am sorry to say they sell the good ones and keep the bad ones, and that is one of the difficulties of trying to improve the breed of the horses in the poorer districts. They will turn anything into money they can.

13450. It paid poor breeders?—I think so; the horse was very popular.

13451. Did you ever use any of his gets or see them trained?—No.

13452. Or did they always sell before they came to a workable age?—I think so; there was one of these cobs I spoke of just now by him.

13453. You don't know anything about his performances as a useful animal—the cob by him?—I don't. I sold this hackney stallion back to a tenant after I had done with him, and he got some very good harness horses down there near Plymouth.

13454. Did he get them with action?—I think so.

13455. Do you think the produce of this horse with the mares in the districts were big enough to do the farm work required of them if they hadn't been sold?—I think the cross between him and the farm mares of the country was a useful animal. It was strong enough for the agricultural work of that district, and they were marketable for van horses and for tram horses. They made a better foundation for the thoroughbred to work on afterwards than the original cart mare.

13456. You think for grading up the mares of that district to thoroughbred horses the Hackney cross was a good one?—Yes.

13457. CHAIRMAN.—Have you taken any steps to try and induce the farmers not to sell their best mares?—Nothing but in the show offering good prizes for mares and for young horses.

13458. Do you think it has had much effect?—It certainly has improved the horse-breeding in the country; they take more trouble and winter their young ones better.

13459. Do you think the mares are kept that otherwise would be sold?—I am not sure about that. The brood mares they exhibit are as a rule pretty old. Nowadays a farmer cannot afford to keep anything he can turn into money.

13460. Anything else you can tell the Commission?—The only thing I can mention is this—the congested districts being specially in my mind. I think one of the difficulties in improving a breed in a rough country is that there is always a doubt if a cross will stand the climate. That is what they found with the Exmoor pony—he will live anywhere and anyhow; if you cross him you improve him in some ways, you get him bigger and he is more marketable and useful, but he won't rough it like the original, if his breeder is a poor man that won't do. If you breed them suitably you probably get a very useful beast with a pony constitution, but your cross is not strong enough to live out in the winter weather in the moorland districts. They may find that in the congested districts.

13461. Mr. WRENCH.—You have not heard as a matter of fact that the produce of the Hackneys winter out in the hills, and come in in very good condition in Ireland?—I know nothing about that.

13462. Lord ENNISKILLEN.—The result you found yourself in crossing anything with the Exmoor was that it did away with the hardness?—That is the experience of the district; they have good constitutions, but they won't rough it like the original.

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13463. CHAIRMAN.—According to your experience you say that the pure pony stands the climate and exposure better than any cross?—Yes.

13464. And you think—though you don't know the congested districts—it might possibly be the same there?—You can improve the Exmoors, and it has been done, and you can get them bigger, stronger, and more useful, but you have got to take care of the young stock.

Colonel F. HENRY, Elmstree, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, examined.

Colonel F. Henry.

13465. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Gloucestershire, do you not?—Yes, my lord.

13466. And you are a member of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—I am on the council at the present time.

13467. Have you bred horses yourself at all?—Yes, I have for a considerable number of years.

13468. Have you any acquaintance with Ireland as a horse-breeding country?—No, further than that I know that three-fourths of the horses supplied to our hunt in Gloucestershire come from Ireland, for I have made particular inquiry from horse dealers that supply hunters. They tell me that at least three-fourths of the horses they sell come from Ireland, and they consider them superior in every way as hunters to English-bred horses. They have more stamina, and come to the hand more readily. They take less schooling they consider. I have asked three or four of them the question.

13469. Do you know at all whether they can get as many good hunters in Ireland now as formerly?—I asked that question particularly, and one man told me he could get as many horses as he liked if he could pay for them, and give the high price. Another man told me he never found horses so scarce. The last man does a great deal in the County Waterford, in that neighbourhood at least, and he told me he was there last spring and he saw thirty-six mares brought to Widger's to be stinted, and he should not say there were more than three good mares among the thirty-six.

13470. Who told you that?—A man who buys very largely in Ireland.

13471. Do you think they attach any importance to the fact that the horse was bred in Ireland, owing to the mere fact that it was bred in Ireland?—They do. As soon as they hear a hunter is bred in Ireland they prick up their ears and think the horse is worth more money than if it was bred in England. I know myself when I am buying horses, if I heard a horse was from Ireland, I should be much more likely to buy him.

13472. Do you know Ireland yourself?—I was quartered there a great many years ago, but I have not been there of late years.

13473. Do you attach any importance to having pedigrees with the horses?—Oh, yes; I do I bought a horse the other day. A man told me it was by "Ascetic;" he said, "I consider 'Ascetic' the best sire standing in Ireland." I asked him could he prove it. He proved it to my satisfaction, and it certainly made a difference in my purchasing the horse.

13474. I suppose you cannot say whether the pedigrees that the breeders give in Ireland are generally accurate or not?—No.

13475. You have not been buying horses yourself in Ireland lately?—No; I breed most of what I want.

13476. What have you done in the way of breeding yourself?—I have bred, and I have bought suckers at Captain Fife's sale, and brought them on as hunters; but my experience of breeding is—as you have heard other people say—that the horses get smaller instead of bigger. I have always bred from neat mares, and been able to sell them well in London as hacks.

13477. What kind of horses?—15.1 and 15.2 by thoroughbred horses.

13478. What kind of mares?—Hunting mares; mares that one would think would bring bigger foals than they have done.

13479. You have bred with the object of getting hunters?—Yes.

13480. What did you do with those that were not good enough for hunters?—They have all been neat and nice horses. I have good facilities for breaking them in, and have made them handy, and sell them as hacks in London.

13481. Without going into particulars, can you get a price for them for that particular purpose that pays?—Yes; I get a good deal of work out of them between four and six years old, ride them myself, and hack them. I break them in as hacks and drive them.

13482. And the six years old, they are fit to sell?—I sold a five-year old, only 14.3 hands, for £80 in London, and he had done a good year's work before.

13483. Is that a horse suitable for driving and riding, both?—Yes.

13484. That is what he is used for?—I believe he is used entirely for riding where he has gone.

13485. Was that by a thoroughbred sire?—Yes; I never use anything but a thoroughbred horse.

13486. Do you think that a system of registering mares would be beneficial to Ireland?—Yes, I think it would, most certainly; for I find that farmers who have got mares registered now in our hunters' prize book can always get a better price for their offspring than a man who has not got it registered. You take the trouble to go and look at a mare's foal that you know is entered in the hunters' prize book and a mare that was not, you would not take the trouble to go and see.

13487. And about stallions—do you think registration would be sufficient, or that there ought to be something more stringent in the way of licensing stallions in Ireland?—I don't think I could give an opinion.

13488. Do you know the West of Ireland at all?—No; not at all.

13489. You use nothing but the thoroughbred sire?—Nothing.

13490. You never tried anything else?—A great many years ago I tried what I heard mentioned to-day, an Exmoor cob, with the old pack horse blood in it. I put him on to a thoroughbred mare, and I got a very good animal.

13491. As a hunter?—Yes. But somebody said here to-day that the old pack-horse blood has disappeared, but they were great riding horses with extraordinarily good feet and legs. This was a very good animal. This is more than twenty years ago I am talking of.

13492. You have never used Hackney sires?—No, but I am an owner of two Hackneys.

13493. What kind of Hackney?—One was bred by Sir Walter Gilbey, and the other by Lord Tredegar's "Young Gentleman." They are beautiful steppers, and my wife is very fond of them, but I don't like to drive them myself. I happen to have a pair of horses by a thoroughbred stallion. When I want to go hunting ten or twelve miles from home I always take the pair by the thoroughbred horse, and leave the Hackneys at home. I think they tire in their action; they certainly tire to drive home. I am very fond of driving myself. For parade work, such as in London, I am certain my Hackneys would fetch the most money, but for my own comfort and driving long distances

the thoroughbred horses would kill the other two. They are absolutely in the same condition, looked after by the same man, and the four horses are in the same stable.

13494. What horse are the thoroughbred?—By "The Cob" by "Lord Ronald" out of "The Roe."

13495. What kind of a mare?—It was a mare I bred myself by the Exmoor cob, and she was out of a thoroughbred mare.

13496. Do you know what by?—By "Chit-Chat," a very old mare, my brother's charger in '64. I have three generations—well the grandmother and mother are dead—but I have had three generations. The grandsire of the animals we are talking of was an Exmoor cob.

13497. The Hackneys, what were they out of?—I don't think they were pure-bred. The sire was "Young Gentleman," and the mare a harness mare, and the one I bought at Sir Walter Gilbey's sale was by "Volunteer" out of one of the harness mares, a beautiful actioned mare.

13498. They have good action?—Very good action.

13499. But they don't last?—They tire always. You would not find it out unless you actually drove them yourself. When my man is driving I think they are going beautifully. I catch hold of them and then I find out what the difference is.

13500. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Whatever you bred from thoroughbred horses yourself you have used them both for harness and riding—do you find they have enough action for use?—Yes, I do, certainly.

13501. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Might I ask as to the condition—very much depends upon the condition of the horse as to their endurance—is it possible your wife's pair you speak of are not in the condition of going, say twelve miles to a meet, and going as quickly as you want to do?—I think so, because she is very fond of going eight or ten miles to a golf club. They go there, and my man says they are always very tired after it, and want a rest.

13502. But your wife does not complain of them?—No.

13503. But you have no experience in breeding Hackneys?—No.

13504. If you were sending a pair to London for driving exhibition, yourself or your coachman, which pair would you bring?—The Hackneys.

13505. As the most valuable?—As the most showy and valuable, they would fetch most money in London undoubtedly.

13506. I suppose you know that "Volunteer" only went back one generation to the thoroughbred on the dam side?—No, I did not know that.

13507. Mr. WRENCH.—Do you know that "Young Gentleman" was a Norfolk horse?—No; I only know he belonged to Lord Tredegar.

13508. CHAIRMAN.—Have you any opinion as to whether the introduction of Hackney blood into Ireland would be likely to be prejudicial?—I think it would be prejudicial in this way, that I personally or anybody who wanted to go buying hunters, would make very careful inquiry as to whether the animal had Hackney blood in him. I consider Hackney blood is most suitable for harness and London work, but for riding—no. I never was on either of my Hackneys, and my man has strongly recommended me not to get on them. I did think I would have a ride on them and see what they were like before I came up here. He said, "They will shake you awfully, sir."

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13509. Did you hear the evidence of Captain Fife?—Yes.

13510. Would you generally agree with that as regards Ireland?—Yes, I should. I particularly noticed that horse, "Erskine," that he spoke of—a beautifully-actioned horse.

13511. Is there anything you would like to tell us further?—Only, talking about the Hackney, I met a Berkeley farmer at the show; he was showing "British Prince." I said, "How do you think it will pay you?" He said, "I think it will pay me fairly well, but I tell you what does pay me—keeping a Hackney stallion." He had seventy mares to that stallion last year. He got sixty-three in foal, and the farmers are entering their mares as fast as possible. He expected he should get a hundred this year. I asked what size was it—was it a small Hackney. "No," he said, "15.3."

13512. Lord RATHDONNELL.—Where is this Hackney stallion?—Berkeley Vale. Two men work it on both sides of the river; they are partners.

13513. Have they thoroughbred stallions near them?—They had a thoroughbred stallion, but now there is no stallion at Berkeley Castle.

13514. He finds the Hackney stallion is run after?—Yes.

13515. Do you like the Hackney cross in hunters?—No, not in hunters.

13516. Then you think there is always some danger of farmers going after Hackney stallions if they see them?—There is a very great danger.

13517. So in the hunter breeding districts you would rather not have a Hackney stallion to entice the farmer?—No, the strong stallion is the one they always go for. The only half bred horse they had at Badminton was "Cock Robin." He was a big strong horse, and farmers ran after him.

13518. Mr. WRENCH.—Would you in a country like Ireland confine the farmers to hunter breeding?—No, I think there is room for harness horse breeding.

13519. Harness horses do pay if they have good action?—Yes.

13520. Colonel St. QUINTIN.—Have you any knowledge of Ireland?—Only that I was quartered there for two or three years.

13521. You are hardly capable of expressing an opinion?—Perhaps not.

13522. How long ago is it that this Hackney you spoke of that was so much run after was standing there?—Only last year.

13523. The farmers don't know what the produce was like or what price they would get?—No.

13524. CHAIRMAN.—What made this horse so fashionable?—I cannot tell you that.

13525. Do you know what he charges?—No; he told me that the thoroughbred stallion was two sovereigns. I did not ask him what he charged for this, probably a sovereign.

13526. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—Have you experienced any difficulty in buying carriage horses for your use—the use of your wife or in London—from the dealers in London; have you been able to get English horses, because you mentioned having bought at my sale?—I knew where to go. I have seldom bought horses from a dealer.

Mr. R. H. DALTON, Conservative Club, London, W., examined.

13527. CHAIRMAN.—You are a member of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—Yes, I am on the Council.

13528. Did you hear the evidence given by Captain Fife?—I did.

13529. And do you generally agree with that?—Generally. Of course I think Captain Fife speaks for his district, with which I am not well acquainted, but generally speaking I agree with him.

Mr. R. H. Dalton.

13530. On any particular points do you disagree

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with him?—No, I don't think so. He talked generally about mares and the type of mares down in Dorsetshire, and I don't know very much about them.

13531. It is rather with reference to what he said about Ireland, to improve horse-breeding there; do you generally agree with him in that respect?—Well, I hardly know that I should agree with what he said about a stallion bred by a thoroughbred horse out of Hackney mares. I should hardly perhaps agree with that.

13532. You think that might be rather risky?—Well, it would be an experiment, would it not?

13533. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—Do you know Ireland?—I do not, practically.

13534. Do you breed at all?—No, I do not. I see a good deal of other people's breeding. I have taken a great interest in our Society. I don't breed myself; I have not a suitable place to do it.

13535. CHAIRMAN.—You live in Essex?—Yes.

13536. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—As far as breeding goes for general purposes, what blood do you prefer?—I should think that the way to improve the breed of horses is certainly to have lots of suitable cheap travelling stallions thoroughbred. I think the lines of the Royal Commission are right, but at the same time there are so few horses that it is a drop in the ocean. When you find three horses to go from a mile and a half of where we stand to the Land's End it is a drop in the ocean, but the principle is right.

13537. But still you think that the fact of having these one or two good animals in a district is encouraging, or rather it is an incentive to other people to keep a good class?—Oh, yes; I think it does a great deal of good. I think the Royal Commission and the Hunters' Improvement Society have called attention to horse-breeding, and I am certain there are many more people drawn to breed; but of course there is in some districts a great deficiency of suitable horses. That is so in South Essex particularly.

13538. How would you propose to increase the number?—I take it it is impossible without more money.

13539. Mr. LA TOUCHE.—You have heard some witnesses talk about the scarcity of mares and the deterioration of mares. Did your Council consider in any way what would induce farmers to retain useful mares?—They gave additional prizes to local societies. They gave so much if a local agricultural or horse show society gave so much in prizes for brood mares. We gave them an additional prize which makes it better worth winning and so keeping the mares.

13540. Has it come under your observation that the prospect of winning one of those prizes has induced a farmer to refuse to sell his mare?—I think it induces them to keep the mares; but if a high price were given, I think most of them would jump at it except in the case of farmers who are so well off to whom the nimble ninepence is not a matter of much importance.

13541. Are there many of those in Essex?—No. I am sorry to say there are not many anywhere I know.

13542. You cannot speak personally as to farmers refusing to sell their horses by the prospect of winning a prize?—No; I should not put it that it induces farmers to keep brood mares; for if some fellow came along to the show and offered the farmer a high price for his mare he would let it go, and then probably he would go and get another one. I think it induces farmers to keep the mares, but not to refuse a high price for one.

13543. Do you think the class of mares have improved owing to the action of the Hunters' Improvement Society?—I think the mares are what they are.

13544. The stallions have been covering for some years?—Oh, yes; I think that was the true way to improve horse-breeding. We cannot alter the mares. If they are going to be bred from it is much better that they should be put to suitable stallions than to unsuitable ones.

13545. You think the best way of grading up the mares is to put them to thoroughbred horses?—Generally, except in the case of light, well-bred mares, then I should like to see a good hunter uncut.

13546. Do you prefer that to a Hackney stallion?—Certainly; I don't think the Hackney suitable for hunters.

13547. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—I may take it that you are in favour of the Queen's money given from the privy purse being diverted from racing, and giving stallions these premiums under the Royal Commission?—Most decidedly.

13548. Do you think that any further grant should be given?—Certainly, if possible.

13549. Has it occurred to you that if a further grant were asked for the thoroughbred it would also be asked for other breeds of horses, and there would be no end to subsidising breeds of animals generally?—I don't know about that exactly, but if the object is to improve the breed of horses in this country generally, I certainly think the way to do it is to go on the lines of the Royal Commission, and give very many more stallions. Instead of three stallions to ten counties I should like to see three stallions to one county.

13550. Private enterprise did that entirely before?—Three stallions for a district took in a district where there are numerous horses owned by noblemen and gentlemen that are at the service at low fees for farmers and others who wish to breed.

13551. Which district do you speak of—the Newmarket?—Yes, but the horses there are at two high fees, and it is not a hunter-breeding district. The distribution is wrong. In South Essex there is no stallion, and the farmers breed perfectly wretched animals. Then, again, take Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, there are far more stallions there than are needed. If you altogether depend on private enterprise you get unequal distribution.

13552. Then would you ask it for other breeds of horses besides the thoroughbred?—I personally should not; I am only interested in hunters.

13553. Have you had occasion to use very many carriage horses, have you found any difficulty in getting them?—I have seen a good many in dealers' hands.

13554. Are they English or foreign?—There are a great many foreigners, but the few best are bred in Ireland. I once saw a particularly fine pair of carriage horses that came from Dublin, and I asked the dealer who brought them over how he thought they were bred. He said he believed that the people had tried to breed hunters, and those had the action of carriage horses, and they were nice blood horses, and of course they had sold them for carriage horses.

13555. What colour?—Brown.

13556. Is that lately?—Five years ago. They were a particularly beautiful pair of horses.

13557. But you have only his statement that they were Irish horses?—Yes, but I think he knew.

13558. Yes, but you have only his statement?—Yes; I saw them in his yard, and asked him.

13559. Mr. WRENCH.—I think you said you don't breed horses yourself?—No.

13560. And you don't know Ireland?—I do not.

13561. CHAIRMAN.—These questions as to the distribution of stallions have been rather in reference to England. Our inquiry is in reference to Ireland. There are a great many gentlemen in Ireland, but there are not a great many that have a great deal of money. Is there anything else you would like to tell the Commission?—Except this, that I have seen some little of horses got by Hackneys out of hunters, and the result has not been favourable. The best that I have seen was a fairly useful hunter, but he was a horse that tired after a long day.

13562. Where do you hunt?—In Essex and also in Leicestershire. I saw this horse in Essex. I have seen two horses by Hackneys in hunting stables. The best was a very useful hunter by one of Sir Walter Gilbey's horses out of a London coaching mare, one of a smart team; but he could not stay. *March 12, 1897* Mr. R. H. Dalton.

13563. Have you seen any of them in Leicestershire?—No.

Mr. HETHERINGTON, Edgware Road, London, examined.

13564. CHAIRMAN.—You live in the Edgware Road?—Yes, my lord. Mr. Hetherington.

13565. And are engaged in dealing in horses?—All sorts of horses.

13566. Do you deal in any particular breed of horses more than another?—No; I have had a great many hunters all my life, and a great many harness horses, of course, all my life.

13567. But you are not particularly devoted to hunters?—I am not devoted to anything especially.

13568. What does the bulk of your business consist of?—Harness horses.

13569. Where do you buy your horses mostly?—In Ireland and in England.

13570. Do you buy many horses from abroad?—Yes.

13571. May I take it that you buy what suits you without any particular reference to where it comes from?—I would not buy a horse that comes from Germany on any consideration whatever. I never have, and I was educated there, and I know the country as well as I do England. I bought a great many there to send elsewhere, but I never bought horses there to send to England.

13572. Have you any objection to say why?—Because I don't like them. They were made to look at and not made to use.

13573. How were those kind of horses bred, do you know?—Yes; I know thoroughly. Bred from the old Mecklenburg horse, which is the foundation of the Yorkshire coach horse.

13574. As a mare or as a stallion?—As a stallion. Only in Mecklenburg where the best of these horses always were bred. They breed from the stallion and mare of the same breed; they don't mix them, and hence they get the perpetual action you find in their horses.

13575. What is the matter with those horses?—They are so soft.

13576. What were they crossed with in Yorkshire to make the Yorkshire coach horse?—The Mecklenburg horse must have come here about a hundred years ago into Yorkshire, but you have improved upon him in Yorkshire. I don't know otherwise than that it must have been with a thoroughbred. They have got their blood from our thoroughbred horse in Yorkshire—I feel sure of that in my own mind.

13577. How do you know?—I only know from what I have heard over there in Mecklenburg.

13578. You don't know whether they brought the stallions or the mares over?—I don't know which they brought over.

13579. You approve of these horses otherwise, in every respect, except that they have not got stamina?—Yes.

13580. They have good action?—Yes.

13580A. And you don't buy them because they have not got stamina?—Yes.

13581. Where do you buy your hunters?—In the South of Ireland of course.

13582. Principally?—Well, principally.

13583. Do you buy any in England?—No; very few.

13584. Have you been buying them long in Ireland?—Since 1866.

13585. And in that thirty odd years do you find much difference in the supply or the quality of the supply?—If my memory is good enough to serve me, I used to think that the horses thirty years ago were as good as they are to-day; but whether my memory does serve me sufficiently I can't say. But my impression is that I used to find horses in those days at about half the price I give now, and they were as good. Whether that is right or not I should not like to say.

13586. As to the demand, is the demand bigger than it was?—The demand is double what it was in those days, I think.

13587. How do you buy them?—I buy them myself, and I go over very often.

13588. Have you anybody buying for you?—Yes.

13589. I suppose your buyer collects a certain number of them?—Oh, no. I sometimes go to the fairs; otherwise he collects half a dozen and sends them over.

13590. Do you find that you buy more horses from the breeder himself and less in the fairs than formerly?—No; there are as many at the fairs now, if you take them as a whole, as there were formerly. In England we go to fairs and buy horses, but you buy a great many more privately; you can't in Ireland run about all over the place. You go to the fair and get what you can, and the local man supplies you with what you are deficient of.

13591. Have you bought any horses in the North of Ireland?—Not many—a few.

13592. Where have you bought them?—At Armagh. I have bought them from people that have collected them from the South; they take them up there to feed.

13593. Can you explain to me how that could pay them?—Oh, yes; it pays them very well. They buy these horses at the fairs in the South at £40, £50, up to £55—that is about as much as they give for a three-year-old. They have him with his long tail, and take him up and feed him on potatoes, and he is sold to us dealers.

13594. Why does not the man in the South do that?—I don't know; but he is a man I look on with great respect—the man in the South—because he exercises his horses. The man in the North does not; he feeds the horse like a pig and gets him fat; that is one of the reasons I never go to the North. When you go to the South you can see what your horse is, but when you go to the North you only buy a fat pig, that you can't tell how it will turn out, and he generally dies in the process of getting him fit. Those fellows in the North always buy the best harness colts, and give more for them than anybody else.

13595. Did you ever buy any hunters in England?—Not many; I have bought some. Formerly I used to buy more than I do now. If I see one I buy it of course, but I go to Ireland if I want half a dozen or twenty. I know where to find them.

13596. Don't you know where to find them in England?—No; or if you do you only get an Irishman imported. The horses in Yorkshire are as good-looking as they are in Ireland, but they are a different sort.

13597. And as to their harness horses?—I used to buy a great many harness horses in Ireland, and I continue buying more or less, for my experience told me they are the very best. They are, however, better as hunters on account of their blood, but for harness they are not so good. I don't care what anybody says—unfortunately I have had to pay for it, and that teaches you a wonderful lesson; the more blood you get into your Irish horse the more likely he is to canter; hence comes in the Hackney, and the Hackney is the best harness horse in the world, take him all round; but keep him to himself—don't mix him more than you can help.

13598. What has been described to us in evidence

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as a high-class harness horse, 16 hands, with good action, and so on—do you think the Hackney will produce that?—The Hackney is worth most money.

13599. And can you find him?—I have as much trouble to find him as the Irish horse, but when I have got him I would rather have him as a harness horse.

13600. Have you much experience in Hackneys?—A great deal.

13601. Is the bulk of your business in harness horses in Hackneys?—Oh, no. I have interested myself in Hackneys since 1874, when I have been agent for the French Government here, and I bought all their Hackney stallions.

13602. Have they bought many Hackney stallions?—Yes; I bought all that were at the show the other day that were suitable.

13603. What do they do with them?—They breed artillery horses with them.

13604. Have you any objection to saying what prices they pay for them?—Not the slightest. I gave £400 a piece last week for seventeen.

13605. Have you been buying them for some years?—Since 1874.

13606. Principally Hackneys?—I buy thoroughbred horses sometimes. I bought a few—what you would call country stallions, but not many—perhaps forty in the whole time, not more—but I bought every year about twenty Hackney stallions for them, thirty some years; I bought many Hackneys for Hungary.

13607. Ever since 1874?—Yes, ever since 1874.

13608. Have you been in France yourself?—Oh, yes.

13609. Where do they put them?—We put them all over France—north, south, and in the middle, in Normandy, and right down to the south to Nice.

13610. What kind of mares do they put them to?—In the South of France they have a little small horse—what the light cavalry rides—about 14.3 hands, little bits of things, half Arabs, their produce without any shoulders and no hind legs; then they have these Hackney stallions, the best little Hackneys that I can get, and put those in the South to correct the faults of their own mares. In Normandy we send the Hackney stallions as big as we can get them. They must have the type of the Hackney but we get them as big as we can. I bought some last week 15.3; it is not an easy matter to get a pure Hackney 15.3; I got two sixteen hands, very good horses that took the first prize last year; they go to Normandy. Then there is another class of horses 15.2, he goes to the East of France about Brest and that country; and those horses cover the farmers' mares and they are supposed to get artillery horses. They always use the thoroughbred horse a great deal, but the artillery horse they prefer bred from the Hackney, because he does not want to canter, which is the great fault in your Irish horses in harness.

13611. What kind are the mares in the East?—Very useful sort of little mares with short legs, what you see in the post-cars in the North of France; those grey things they call the Boulonnais; they are 15.2 and 15.3, stout horses without courage, and they take the Hackney stallions to improve their courage.

13612. What do you say?—If they found it not to pay they would not go on doing it, and they have been doing it since 1868.

13613. And therefore we may presume that in their opinion it is successful?—And every year they want more. It proves to a certain extent that the Hackney if put in his place is a very useful brute.

13614. Have you a sufficiently long experience in France to know if the Hackney does give the requisite courage?—They would not go on if they did not approve of him.

13615. I am asking you if you know yourself?—I go there, and of course I am an official in the French service, and so I get at the undercurrent of everything; and the breeders over there are very much pleased to see Hackneys arrive, and keep saying they wished they had some more. It must be to the benefit of the breeder or else the breeder would not want them.

13616. I should not like to press you for your opinion?—Oh, yes; my own opinion, it does not matter.

13617. It might be to the convenience of the breeder but to the inconvenience of the artillery?—What would you use to breed an artillery horse—to improve on it—except a horse that has action and does not want to canter?

13618. Well, I don't know; I am asking you?—I suppose they find our horses are better than their own or they would not use them.

13619. Have they tried the thoroughbred in that part of the country?—Yes; he stands by the side of the Hackney, and they prefer the Hackney.

13620. I suppose you have seen the results of all these horses in different parts of France?—Of course I have.

13621. What do you think of them?—Well, I have seen some horses got by the Hackney—as fine horses as ever I saw in Normandy, but out of coaching mares.

13622. Should you say at all that that is the class of horse that we have had in evidence as bought in the London market for carriage purposes?—Yes. If the breeder has the opportunity to put his mare to a Hackney horse there he has to subscribe his name, and he takes the nomination to the Hackney horse in preference to the French trotter.

13623. What is the French trotter?—The animal that is created from the old Percheron mare and our old Norfolk trotter that went from here in Napoleon the Third's time. He was the first man to take the English trotting Hackney blood to France.

13624. For the action?—For the action. The Normandy horse is a very heavy horse, a very good-looking horse, better looking than anything we can grow in England, but he has not the activity; he is a dull horse, and our Hackney is supposed to give him life and action.

13625. Do you think he does?—I think so.

13626. They breed them for trotting and racing in Normandy?—I am talking of the ordinary horses. If you breed a trotter in Normandy you must breed him from a trotter out of a trotting mare; but it is the man who breeds the horse to sell that puts him to our Hackney.

13627. How do they manage with these Government stallions—what kind of fees do they charge?—I bought a very good horse last week at the show; I gave £600 for him. As soon as he was bought all the nominations were subscribed for at eight francs (six shillings and eight pence)—that is the fee the people there will pay.

13628. Where is he going to?—To Normandy.

13629. Do the Government select the mares?—No; but the Government would not allow a horse as good as I spoke about to cover a very inferior mare. The man at the station who has charge of the horses has a right to say:—"No; I won't cover your mare; you can put it to so and so. Your mare is not good enough."

13630. How many mares would that horse be limited to?—Forty or fifty—not a hundred like they have here.

13631. Do the Government have any call upon the produce?—None at all; they buy them in open market.

13632. Where did you say their cavalry remounts were bred—in the South?—Oh, no; they are bred all over; but in the South of France they have a great many light cavalry horses that, according to our ideas of horses, are very inferior—in fact you would not have thought they could carry the man they have to carry, but they have our horses down there to improve these horses and they find the Hackney does

improve more than anything. They have plenty of blood in their horses; what they want is a little more power.

13633. And they think they can get that better from the Hackney than anything else?—I suppose so; there are about a hundred people who go into this thing and study it from the beginning of January to the end of December; I presume they know what they are about.

13634. Do they have a thoroughbred standing alongside the Hackney?—Yes.

13635. Do they give the farmer his choice?—Yes, he has his choice if he likes, but the farmer there would not use the thoroughbred any more than he would here. If you have a thoroughbred and a Hackney standing together in a village in England, you will always find a farmer chooses the big one—the common one—instead of the blood horse.

13636. Do you think he is wise to do that?—No, of course he is not, but a farmer is not wise always.

13637. Do you know anything about the breeding establishments on the Continent?—Oh, yes, my lord—Germany and Austria. I know Austria thoroughly. I have sent a good many stallions to Hungary—"Buccaneer" and "Astregor" besides many others.

13638. Can you tell us anything about their system there?—It is almost the same as in France. They have those horses placed at the different stations, but they have more stallions assembled in one place in Hungary. At the big studs they have more stallions collected at one station than they have in France. In France they are placed in depots: every village has a stallion nearly.

13639. What kind of stallions do they have in Hungary?—They have the best they can—thoroughbred, they have very few Hackneys. I bought some as far back as 1870 for them—fifty—and they go on now every year, but only a small quantity—fifteen; and fifteen Hackney stallions in a country like Hungary would not make much impression.

13640. The Hungarian native horse—what is he like?—Very good; but he is only about 14.3.

13641. A superior animal to the South of France horse?—I should think so.

13642. More quality?—No; he is more stuffy.

13643. As to your business at home, do you find your demand for carriage horses keeping up?—Yes.

13644. In all classes?—Yes.

13645. Not only the superior but the common?—Well, no; there is no demand at all for the inferior class, you have to push it. It is the superior horse that is scarce now. The middle class horse has got no value at all. You don't know where his value comes in and where it goes out since these Americans have come in.

13646. Do you attribute it all to that?—I do.

13647. Is there a very good market for that kind of horse?—Very bad market.

13648. And the American horse that beats us, is he as good as the native horse that we can produce here?—No; he is not as good; he is better, and cheaper, and that is the curse of it; because it does away with the poor man, the unlucky farmer who cannot breed all good ones—he is very lucky if he breeds one in four. These American horses came in, and they are as good as you can have horses to be.

13649. Since when did that competition become severe?—Since about four years.

13650. How do you account for that—has the trade gone down?—No; but they came here to England, and went to France and bought all the best stallions and a certain number of mares; they took them over there, and now they are giving us back our own coin. The omnibus horse in London is bred from the Clydesdale out of the American mare, but it is the best animal you can find. You cannot find any horse with the same merits in him at the same price that he is supplied at.

13651. You don't think the introduction of the bicycle has affected that trade at all?—I suppose it must have affected it; of course in America they are using these motor cars and the electrical railway; it makes the horse market a very bad market over there, and they send them here because they really don't know what to do with them. They sell for £15 a piece—a very useful horse. We cannot produce any sort of horse here for £15.

13652. May I take it that you think that the demand for a good hunter is as good as ever it was?—Better than ever.

13653. And for a very superior carriage horse?—A very superior carriage horse is better than ever; he is worth more money than ever he was, but when you go below that you are nowhere.

13654. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—At the beginning of your evidence you talked about the German horse which you didn't like, and the Yorkshire horse, and you said they were alike a good deal in appearance?—Yes; very like.

13655. And you say that you think that the German horse was the origin of the Yorkshire coach horse?—Yes, I think the German horse came here when our Royal people came here; that is when he came here first.

13656. Do you know whether that is the accepted theory of the Yorkshire Coach-horse Society?—I don't know what their theory is, I have heard so many theories; it is only my opinion; it is my idea from seeing the two things side by side, because nobody would know a German coach-horse stallion from a Yorkshire stallion, even in these days. Ours must have gone over there or theirs come over here.

13657. You say you do buy a lot of horses in Ireland still?—Yes.

13658. The best?—If I can get any good ones there; but you cannot get harness horses in Ireland like we used to.

13659. There are more people trying to buy them?—I don't think that.

13660. Whereabouts do you get the best?—In the South.

13661. All over the South?—All over the South. Take a straight line from Dublin to Westport, and south of that.

13662. I suppose if you take the South in the main the best horses are by thoroughbred horses?—Certainly; we have not seen any other horse that would be at all likely to get the harness horse proper. I have seen a great many half-bred horses in the South of Ireland ten years ago—stallions that used to cover there—but they hadn't any affinity to the harness horse; they only had an affinity to the hunter—good shoulders and short quarters; it applied to the hunter, but it would not apply to the harness horse.

13663. As regards Hackneys, I think you said you would like to keep them pure?—Certainly; I have seen them in Yorkshire, and everybody does to-day. The Hackney is used a great deal in the East Riding, because they have not any coach-horses; but I don't know that he is being used to any disadvantage to the farmer. Of course he is much smaller than the old coach-horse, but the old coach-horse is not wanted now as much as he used to be wanted, and the Hackney almost comes in at the same value, I think, as the old coach-horse—that is, the pure Hackney. A Hackney used to cover the old coaching mares or the remnants of the old coaching mares.

13664. I think you said they were not there?—They have a few of the old coaching mares, because Hackneys have not been used in Yorkshire more than thirty years. Prior to that they were always in Norfolk. Well, I will call it twenty years ago.

13665. Do they get size enough for the London carriage horses?—No, but a great many more smaller horses are required than used to be required, on account of the smaller carriages that are used now. I think the coach horse is dying out, more from the fact that he is not wanted than anything else.

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13666. CHAIRMAN.—Do you think the carriage adapted itself to the horse, or the horse to the carriage?—The horse to the carriage, certainly. If a farmer has a big coach horse about 16.2 and takes it to a fair, he cannot sell it; if he has a Hackney 15.2 he can sell it at a good price.

13667. Mr. FITZWILLIAM.—You don't go in to a great extent for hunters?—I have had a great many hunters.

13668. Did you buy these in Ireland, too?—Yes; always.

13669. You think they are the best that exist?—In my opinion they are; I would not think of buying hunters anywhere else. If I found a hunter when I was travelling about in Yorkshire I should buy it, but I never think of looking for one; whereas in the autumn, dating from July, I am in Ireland every three weeks.

13670. You would not like to introduce the Hackney cross in the hunter?—No; I would not think about it.

13671. And therefore you would not like to introduce the Hackney cross in the South of Ireland?—Certainly not; I would not listen to it in the South of Ireland. Most unfortunately up to this year I was very averse to believing a Hackney could gallop; I had a hunter this year got by "Danegelt," and I never rode a stouter horse in my life.

13672. But as a practice, you should not like the cross introduced into the hunter-breeding district?—If the South of Ireland ever wavers in its allegiance to the thoroughbred horse, I contend that all your foreign trade, which is a great thing in Ireland, would be lost. The foreigner gives nearly as much for a hunter as an Englishman does, and he always goes to Ireland for it.

13673. And he goes there because of the reputation that Ireland has got for breeding the best?—He does not go on the reputation. He begins by buying English hunters, and after he has been buying them for five or six years, he gradually finds his way to Ireland, because he finds he gets better there than in England.

13674. Then any alteration in the breed would be a risk, at all events?—I should think it would be a curse.

13575. Colonel ST. QUINTIN.—I should like to ask you what the Percheron mare is?—I have asked many times and I have seen a great many of them, and they are very good, but where they descend from I have never been able to find out. Mr. Gretton—you know whom I mean—breeds from these Percheron mares, puts them to his thoroughbred horses, and produces the finest harness horses you could possibly imagine, and he won't breed from anything else. When I am over there I always try to bring him back a mare or two, and I have often tried to find out what was the history of them, but I never can. It is a race that has been in France for two hundred years. It is a blood animal with beautiful limbs and beautiful neck, and the tail set on well, and its body is as round as a beer barrel, which is a very good thing in a harness horse.

13676. And good action?—And good action.

13677. What sort of height?—15.2½ up to 16 hands, but they have altered the old Percheron horse. He used to be a sharp harness horse; they used to drive him twenty-five or thirty miles; but now he has been created into a heavier horse, and what you see in the Paris omnibus is supposed to be a Percheron, but he is not a Percheron.

13678. Is not the Hungarian supposed to be about the best of the Continental horses?—I don't know, but I have heard a great many people speak of them.

13679. I thought you said they were very good?—The smaller horses that they mount the light cavalry on are better than the light cavalry horses in the South of France: they are much about the same height—14.2.

13680. Do you ever get any big up-standing carriage horses out of the Moy?—Oh, yes.

13681. How are they chiefly bred?—I believe they bring them from the South.

13682. But they are the big up-standing London carriage horses?—Yes; but there are a great many horses taken to the Moy that are very common horses.

13683. Yes; but I was asking what you buy—you should not buy them?—No.

13684. But you do buy some of the other class from the Moy, but they are from the South?—They are from the South and West: I don't think they are bred in the North—at least not many of them.

13685. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—You have been visiting France for the last twenty years?—Yes.

13686. And you have been buying horses here since '74, and previous to that time in France?—Yes.

13687. From your experience in travelling over France, do you consider there is a great improvement in remounts—I am speaking of the Percheron horse as a horse suitable for cavalry purposes?—Yes, he has improved. The contract horse that is bought as a remount has improved generally in the last twenty-five years. I think they have some as useful horses in the heavy regiments in France as we have in England.

13688. We had one witness yesterday, a London dealer, who has spoken very unfavourably of the Normandy horse. You have made some mention of the Normandy horse. Have you any knowledge of his breeding?—Yes, he is bred from the Percheron unquestionably, because they have the great Percheron mare, what they call the poster, a broad, good-looking animal. Then they have the Percheron horse, which is a great heavy bulky horse, and he has been crossed with the horse of Normandy of some sort or other, I should fancy the thoroughbred, because the race of the Norman horse is not above fifty years old.

13689. Well the Norfolk trotter, has he found his way into Normandy?—Oh, yes; and he is appreciated a great deal more there than anywhere else.

13690. Do you think he is the foundation of those carriage horses we see in Paris?—I don't know, I haven't been able to find out. There were some big horses in Normandy before Napoleon's time, and Napoleon was the first man to import Hackneys into France in any quantities.

13691. Have you been attending many of the local races in the Provinces in France, where they give prizes for trotters?—Yes.

13692. And they call them the Norfolk trotter?—Yes.

13693. How is that horse bred?—They have been bred for years from the trotter and by a trotting mare. The old horse he traced his best colts to a thoroughbred horse, "Heir of Lynne." He was imported there thirty years ago, in fact when I was in the Administration as a boy, by Mr. du Taillard.

13694. The CHAIRMAN.—How long have you acted for the Administration?—Since 1869.

13695. Sir WALTER GILBEY.—You supplied foreigners considerably you said. Previous to that date which you mentioned, who preceded you in your particular calling?—Philips.

13696. And he was the introducer of the Norfolk Hackney in Yorkshire?—In France.

13697. But I am speaking of Yorkshire?—It was Ramsdale was the first man.

13698. Did you ever hear from Mr. Philips that he took the Norfolk horse to Mr. Ramsdale—did you ever hear that?—Yes.

13699. He had great experience with regard to the importation in France and Germany, and he sent them I suppose more largely than you have done since?—Certainly. In those days they had no thoroughbred in France to any extent. He was the man who imported the original thoroughbred stallions. In fact, I was acting for Mr. Philips at that time.

13700. Mr. WRENCH.—Practically, you commenced your career in Hungary?—No, I did not.

13701. I thought you were born there?—No, I was pretty nearly born there.

13702. You know every part of the Continent?—Yes.

13703. Mr. Philips at that time was by far the largest and most important dealer of horses in England?—Certainly.

14704. You succeeded to his foreign business, and were with him a great deal, and knew what his business was?—Yes.

13705. Did you hear he gave evidence before a Royal Commission some twenty-five years ago?—Yes, I believe he did; but I did not take any interest in it in those days. Mr. Philips and Mr. East were connected.

13706. Any evidence Mr. Philips gave would be absolutely accurate?—I should think so. He had great knowledge.

13707. Had he gone abroad himself?—He was educated in France.

13708. Do you you remember his buying a horse called "Norfolk Phenomenon"?—No; that was twenty years before my time.

13709. Do you know yourself whether that horse went into Yorkshire?—I don't know at all. I haven't the slightest idea.

13710. You don't know when the Hackneys had been introduced in Yorkshire?—When I was quite a youngster; old Philips used have horses brought from Market Weighton that he used to show at the Yorkshire Show. He took some horses from Norfolk into Yorkshire, and tried to breed those Hackneys, and did breed them I believe.

13711. Do you know before you began to buy yourself did Philips import Hackneys into France?—Yes.

13712. Was the importation of Hackney stallions in France going on before your time?—Yes; before my time. It is forty years since the first Hackney stallion went into France.

13713. Have you formed any opinion as to whether there are Hackneys in Yorkshire now with staying blood?—Oh, no, I have not; but I have some very good harness horses got by Hackneys.

13714. Do those horses show any softness?—No.

13715. Have you any idea why the Yorkshiremen have given up breeding coach-horses?—Because they did not find a market for them.

13716. Do they find a market for the Hackneys they breed there?—Yes, and harness horses got by Hackneys.

13717. Do you think the thoroughbred horse with action himself would produce action in his progeny in the same certain way as the Hackney?—I don't know that.

13718. Have you tried it?—Yes. I should not breed from a thoroughbred unless he has action.

13719. Does the Hackney, if he is well bred, produce action in his stock?—Yes, unquestionably. The only point in my view of the Hackney is whether he is old enough as a race to give a type. The thoroughbred horse is a much older breed, but I don't know whether the Hackney is old enough himself as a race to give a stamp, or what I wish to say is to show himself as much in his progeny as the thoroughbred.

13720. But do you find that the produce of the Hackney with these country mares in France is fairly uniform?—Certainly fairly uniform. The Hackney as we used to know it in England certainly did not give uniformity in his produce, because of the mares. If you breed from a Hackney mare and a Hackney stallion I believe it is very good progeny, but I am a great believer in the Hackney put to any sort of mare.

13721. What class of mares are those artillery horses bred from?—I don't know what they are. They are all sorts of things. They must find the Hackney improving the progeny or they would not go on using them.

13722. You think they have good reason for going on using them?—Of course they must have reasons.

13723. When you refer to being able to get less harness horses from Ireland, is it because they lack action or trotting power?—No; they lack trotting power. We find we can get good horses in a better market than Ireland now.

13724. When you take Ireland and draw a line across the hunter-breeding district, do you know anything of the country North and West of that line?—Yes, I know something, but I have never been able to find any colts there. They are got only to buy and keep on in North of Ireland.

13725. Do you think there may be a trade in breeding harness horses in that district that would pay the farmers?—Certainly a trade in harness horses, but not in breeding hunters.

13726. Do you think there would be room in the country to breed both harness horses and hunters?—I don't know that; I can't tell that. I would not bind myself.

13727. Would you be in favour of having the pedigrees of horses registered? Would you start a Hunters' Improvement Society in Ireland, the same as the Society here?—Quite so.

13728. You would be in favour of that?—I would not use anything but thoroughbred horses in Ireland.

13729. Do you think it would add to the value of the horses now bought in Ireland by foreigners if they were able to get an authenticated pedigree with them?—No, I don't think it would be material; the horse speaks for himself.

13730. You don't attach importance to pedigree?—You attach importance to pedigree, but you attach much more importance to the form of the horse.

13731. If you saw a horse that would give satisfaction in form, and heard that his dam or grand-dam had been got by a Hackney, would that stop you buying it?—I should not buy him as a hunter; as a harness horse it would not stop me at all—on the contrary.

13732. You say these horses have been used in France to impart courage to the native mares?—Yes.

13733. Do you think the Hackney has lost any of his power to give courage through his not being used so much now, actually worked? As a matter of fact most of the stallions do nothing except they are brought out and shown, and then sent to the stud, and do you think he has lost any of his power of imparting courage owing to his not being used?—Every horse that goes directly from here he is supposed to be a horse that has done nothing at all. They bring him out in the bridle, and you are supposed to buy at whatever price is fixed on. Directly he goes to France a man gets on him and rides him. These horses are ridden every morning. A man sounds a bugle and eighty men get on eighty stallions.

13734. Are they exercised afterwards in the saddle?—Yes. If a Hackney is soft he has to get just the same exercise as a thoroughbred, and if he were not improving the French indigenous horse, he would not be asked for.

13735. And if he was soft you would find it out?—Oh, wouldn't they! They would not here, but they would there.

13736. And you would hear of it?—Of course I should.

13737. You haven't heard complaints on that score?—No, if I had I should not receive orders from the Minister.

13738. Did you buy many Hackneys in the Show in '96?—Twenty-one.

13739. About the same price?—No; I don't think they cost so much as this year.

13740. In your opinion would Hackney sires be suitable to grade with such weedy mares as you have described in the South of France, with bad shoulders and half Arab?—I presume they would.

March 12, 1897.

Mr. Hetherington.

13741. Have you seen any of the produce from there?—Yes.

13742. Is the produce better than the mares themselves?—Yes, stouter.

13743. You have never seen the produce of those mares crossed with a thoroughbred horse?—Yes, I have.

13744. What was the result?—The first cross was better with the thoroughbred horse than with the Hackney.

13745. Then would they get too weedy?—I don't know afterwards. I only saw the first cross, and the produce by the thoroughbred horse was absolutely bigger in his limbs than the produce by the Hackney.

13746. Do you know whether any foreign Governments buy sires from Normandy farmers?—Every Government in Europe buy out of Normandy.

13747. What do they buy?—In October every year 800 stallions are brought before the commission, and two or three officers in the *haras*, they pick out perhaps 150 out of the 800 stallions which are shown to us at three years old. After we have picked what we want the Italians come in; after the Italians the Bavarians; and after the Bavarians the Russians. Normandy is a great depot for the supply of these people.

13748. And these horses are used for the breeding of cavalry horses?—Yes.

13749. Do you know whether any other Governments were buying Hackneys at this last show?—Yes, they were buying for Austro-Hungary, Switzerland, and Norway and Sweden.

13750. The CHAIRMAN.—How many stallions are there under the French Administration?—25,022.

13751. Are they all Hackneys?—Oh, no. The Hackney bears the proportion of one in twenty.

13752. What would the nineteen-twentieths be?—Trotters, Percherons, thoroughbreds, and horses of the country. In Brest there is a station. There is a station at Perpignan, and at Tarbes, and in Valenciennes, and if they have a horse there that does not suit their country he is changed to another station.

13753. And who settles all that?—There is a Minister, and he has a staff of eighty-four people under him.

13754. And they have to decide as to the suitability of the sire?—Each man at his station is a local man, and he says, "I want so many horses, so many Normans, or so many thoroughbreds, or so many of this class or the other."

13755. Can you tell the proportion of thoroughbreds you have would bear of those stallions?—About one-twentieth.

13756. That is about the same proportion as Hackneys?—I should think so.

13757. You talk of Mr. Phillips introducing Hackneys forty years ago. Is that the same sort of animal you call the Hackney now?—No. I was talking only the other day with a friend of mine at the show, a Frenchman, and he said to me: "Where is the old Hackney we used to get?" I said, "We don't want him now." "Yes," he said "I would like to find him now. He was commoner and stronger, with splendid action, and a great big head; and now," he says, "these Hackneys are such small fellows, gentlemen with their tails cut, with little heads and little feet comparatively to what we used to see in the horses before." He has been improved upon, but the question is whether he has been improved upon for the purpose for which he was ordained. We can't have all the big horses that you get from Sir Walter Gilbey, because we want horses for £300 or £400, and when we go to Sir Walter it is about £2,000, and then we slide off.

13758. I gather from you that so far as hunters are concerned you don't approve of Hackney blood?—Certainly not.

13759. Do you think it would be injudicious to introduce it largely into any part of Ireland?—I don't know. I don't think I am the person to give an opinion on that subject. They use, perhaps, worse horses than Hackneys in Ireland—much worse—but I don't think it would be a very easy matter to get the Hackney and the native to improve the breeding. If you have a good horse and a native it might be very advantageous in certain parts of Ireland, but you may get Hackneys 15 hands or 14.2. That sort, surely, would not be of advantage to Ireland. At all events it would not be any good for commencement.

13760. You think generally the character of the horses in France has been improved during your knowledge as far as artillery and cavalry remounts are concerned?—They have been improved in everything. They hadn't race horses fifty years ago, and now they come over here, and compete with us at Newmarket with their race horses, and they have improved in every other degree. No horse is allowed to cover there that is not sound. Directly we have a horse that costs us £3,000, if he is in the Administration, and somebody tells us he is unsound, he is cut the next day and sold. It would not do here. That must tell in the end. If I have a Hackney stallion that makes a noise he is cut. He is not sold as a stallion.

The Commission adjourned.

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APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

REPORTS ON HORSE-BREEDING AND AID GIVEN BY THE STATE IN AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY, FRANCE, ITALY, AND PRUSSIA.

REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN AUSTRIA.

ANSWERS to QUESTIONS of the COMMISSION on HORSE-BREEDING in IRELAND.

Question 1.—Amount of money spent by the Government on Horse-breeding.

The Estimates of the Austrian Ministry for Agriculture for 1897, give the following figures under the head of Horse-breeding :—

	EXPENDITURE.		
	Ordinary. £ sterling.	Extraordinary. at 12 gulden to £1.	Total.
1. State Studs (Radautz and Piber),	32,450	854	33,304
2. State Stallion Depots,	86,275	5,808	92,083
3. Farms for Colts bought by the State,	6,758	—	6,758
4. Additions to State Breeding-stock by purchase from private breeders,	25,875	—	25,875
5. Encouragement of Horse-breeding,	10,062	—	10,062
6. Foal-farms in Nadworna (for Fillies bought by the State),	1,108	1,108	2,216
Total,	162,528	7,770	170,298

From the foregoing figures it appears that the Ministry of Agriculture actually disburses £170,298 in the maintenance of the State Studs, and in the encouragement of horse-breeding generally.

The receipts of this branch of the Ministry, for 1897, are estimated as follows :—

INCOME FROM HORSE-BREEDING ESTABLISHMENTS.

Ordinary Income.	—
	£
1. State Studs (Radautz and Piber),	8,842
2. State Stallions Depots (Covering Fees, &c.),	18,466
3. Colt-farms,	678
Total,	27,986

The amount of the receipts (£27,986 as estimated for 1897) is paid into the Ministry of Finance by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Question 2.—The system on which the money is spent.

1. *State Stud Farms.* 2. *Stallion depots.*

There are two State Studs in Austria, viz., Radautz and Piber. The object of these establishments is to provide stallions for use throughout the country. These stallions are first sent to the Central depots, and then distributed to the various stations in the country, where they remain during the covering-season. Care is taken that each stallion should be suited to the requirements of the district, where his services are to be placed at the disposal of farmers and private breeders. For the use of the country stallions (landesbeschäler) a very small covering-fee is charged per mare, which varies from one to ten guldens (12 guldens = £1) for ordinary stallions.

In some districts, where the peasants are very poor, and the breed of horses is in danger of degenerating, mares are covered by State stallions free of charge.

The Committee of Inquiry on Horse-breeding, which sat in 1876, resulted in the division of the whole Cis-Leithan territory into five districts, with a view to the distribution of stallions especially suited to existing local breeds, viz. :—

(*a.*) The Noric district, *i.e.*, Zell, St. Johann, and the neighbouring districts where the heavy Noric breed prevails.

(*b.*) An Alpine district, including Tyrol, Salzburg, Styria, Upper Austria, and a part of Carinthia, where the "*Pinzgauer*" horses, and crosses of that hardy breed, are mostly used.

(*c.*) A mountain district, including parts of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Lower Austria, where various lighter types of horse are bred.

(*d.*) Galicia and Bukowina, where the local breed (Galician peasant horse) in small and light.

(*e.*) Dalmatia and parts of Carinthia and the coast district, where small hardy little horses are wanted as pack animals.

The following classes of stallions where decided upon for use in these various districts :—

(*a.*) The Noric district.—The local breeds to be kept as pure as possible, and in Salzburg, especially, only "Pinzgauer" stallions to be used.

(N.B. The Pinzgauer breed is extremely useful for draught purposes in hilly districts. The colour is peculiar—white or light colour "splashed" with dark spots. The Pinzgauer horses are very strong and hardy, and have good action; the lighter class trot quite well enough for heavy carriage work over bad ground).

(*b.*) Stallions similar to the prevailing local breeds.

(*c.*) Strong heavy stallions, suitable for the production of a heavy cart breed.

(*d.*) Light stallions, of the carriage or riding-horse class.

(*e.*) "Lippizaner" stallions, *i.e* an excellent class of horse bred at the Imperial Stud in Lippiza, and which is of mingled Spanish-Italian and Arab descent.

The leading principles by which the Austrian Ministry for Agriculture is guided in selecting stallions for distribution to country stations are :—

1. To encourage *good* local breeds, such as the Noric horse, the Pinzgauer, and the Huzulen, or small Carpathian breed. All these are to be kept pure.

2. To improve, by judicious crossing, any local breeds which have degenerated, or are in danger of doing so.

The stallions used are of the following classes :—

1. Stallions of English origin—

(*a.*) Thoroughbred stallions to be used in districts where the majority of the mares are big and strong, but not cart-bred. These thoroughbreds are mostly bred in the country.

(*b.*) Roadster, Clydesdale, and Suffolk stallions for the production of heavy carriage and riding horses, also remounts.

2. Oldenburger stallions for the production of medium carriage horses and artillery horses.

3. Belgian stallions are used to improve and give character to the heavy draught breeds.

4. The lighter class of Ardennes stallion is used to give size to the small local breed in Galicia.

Management.

The State horse-breeding establishments have a military organisation, and a Military Department (Militär Abtheilung)—which is an integral part of the standing army—is entrusted with the management of the studs, stallion depots, and covering stations.

This Military Department is subordinated to the Imperial Ministry for War in matters purely military; to the Ministry for Agriculture as regards everything connected with the horse-breeding establishments; and to the Commander of the Local Military Division in matters of discipline.

The purely agricultural part of the stud-farms is worked by civilians—otherwise both management and service are military—a civil organisation having been tried, and having failed utterly, owing to constant changes among the employés who were attracted by higher wages elsewhere.

As it is found that the State studs at Radautz and Piber cannot supply all the stallions required for the country districts, entire colts are purchased by the State, and reared at farms kept especially for this purpose. (See item No. 3 in Estimates for 1897). These colts are usually bought as yearlings.

The State breeding-stock is also added to by purchase from private breeders, either in the country or abroad, and the animals bought are distributed to the studs, to the stallion depots, or to the colt-farms, according to circumstances. (See No. 4 in the Estimates).

Item No. 5 in the Estimates includes expenditure for rearing young stock on commission; for prizes given at the various race-meetings (£4,000); prizes given to breeders (£2,200); subventions to licensed stallions, the property of private owners (£2,250); subventions to prizes at horse shows, &c., and subventions to private owners for rearing foals.

Item No. 6 in the Estimate represents the cost of the foal farms in Nadworna, where fillies purchased by the State are reared for eventual distribution to the peasants in the poorer parts of Galicia (free of charge), on condition that they should be used for breeding purposes.

Question 3.—The amount of money spent on the encouragement of farmers and other private breeders of horses.

Speaking generally, it may be said that the whole expenditure of the Ministry for Agriculture on horse-breeding is a direct encouragement to farmers and private breeders, as they obtain the use of suitable stallions at an almost nominal fee.

The more direct advantages offered come under heads Nos. 5 and 6 in the Estimates, amounting to £12,278.

In these are included as above stated :—

Prizes given at race-meetings.

Prizes given at horse shows and to breeders.

Subventions to owners of licensed stallions.

Subventions to private owners for rearing foals with a view to breeding.

The possibility of obtaining a State stallion, on hire, for use in a private stud under very favourable conditions.

The sale of mares at a price far below their actual value, in the poorer parts, on condition that they are used for breeding; and last, but not least, the ready market offered to private owners by the frequent purchase, made by the Government of animals suitable for the State studs, and for cavalry and artillery remounts.

To give a better idea of the great advantages offered to private breeders, a statement is annexed showing the number and breed of the State stallions at present standing in the covering stations, in private hands, and hired out :—

Summary of Stallions at the Covering Stations, in Private Hands, or on Hire.

	No. of Covering Stations.	No. of Stallions.	English Thoroughbreds.	English Half-bred.	Norfolk.	Arab Thoroughbred.	Arab Half-bred.	Lippizaner.	Kladruber.	Norman (Nonius).	Cart Horse.	Heavy Draught Stallion.	Heavy Riding and Carriage Horses.	Light Riding and Carriage Horses.	Small Breed of Horse—"Huzulen."
a. In Covering Stations,	522	1,763	55	747	197	10	293	69	10	121	261	261	647	825	30
b. In Private Hands,	–	276	1	1	3	–	16	1	–	–	254	254	5	1	16
c. On Hire,	–	99	38	18	8	3	30	1	–	1	–	–	22	77	–
Total,	522	2,138	94	766	208	13	339	71	10	122	515	515	674	903	46

From the foregoing figures it appears that the State possesses no less than 2,138 stallions, of which 94 are English thoroughbreds, 766 English half-breds, and 208 Norfolk. This shows how much English blood is appreciated, though most of the animals in question are bred in the country.

Question 4.—Inducements, if any, held out to private breeders with regard to keeping brood mares.

This question has practically already been answered.

The easy terms, on which the services of suitable stallions are available, are, of course, a direct inducement to private owners to keep brood mares.

As an additional inducement, prizes or premiums are distributed by a regularly appointed Prize Committee, according to the regulations laid down in 1872, viz. :—

1. For brood mares with foal at foot, from five years old and upwards, if their foal is by a State stallion, by a licensed stallion in private hands, or by a stallion belonging to the owner of the mare in question.

"Noric" mares can obtain prizes as four-year-olds.

2. For young mares (two years and three years) when in foal to a State licensed or private stallion.

3. For colts of two and three years, if they give promise of being suitable for stud purposes.

4. For stallions (licensed stallions belonging to private owners).

No stallion for which a State subvention has been granted can compete.

In 1873 premiums were also established for one and two year old fillies.

The prizes consist of—

1. Prizes in cash (4—25 gold ducats). Ducat = 10*s.*
2. Silver medals.
3. Certificates of commendation.

Each recipient of a State prize has to undertake to keep the animal in question for another year, failing which the amount has to be refunded.

In 1891, 3,201 prizes were granted.

Question 5.—The system, if any, of registering or of licensing stallions, the property of private owners.

Private owners are encouraged to keep stallions to cover their mares, and also those of others, as by this means it is hoped that horse-breeding may gradually be emancipated from State assistance.

Private stallions are only encouraged if they are suitable for stud purposes, and their fitness is established by license.

The Committee on Horse-breeding, which sat in 1876, recommended the following amendments of existing laws :—

1. That all stallions used for covering mares, not owned by the proprietor of the stallion, should be obliged to have a license, even if no covering fee were charged.

2. The establishment of a regular system of Licensing Committees.

3. The cost of veterinary examination of stallions for which a license is demanded to be charged to the State.

4. The use of unlicensed stallions to be a punishable offence.

5. Owners of brood mares allowing their mares to be covered by an unlicensed stallion to be punished.

6. That stallions and colts should not be pastured with mares and fillies, especially in Galicia, Bukowina, and Dalmatia, where the local breed is small and light.

These recommendations were adopted by the various provincial diets at different dates, excepting by those of Carinthia, Bohemia, Silesia, and the coast district, where the previously existing laws of 1855, 1866, and 1875 are still in force.

The regulations in the other provinces are all based on the following principles :—

1. No private owner may allow his stallion to cover mares owned by others, whether for a covering fee or gratis, unless he has taken out a license for his stallion for the covering season in question. An exception is sometimes made in favour of owners of English thoroughbreds and stud owners as regards their stud stallions. They may be relieved by the local authorities from the obligation of taking out a license.

2. Any owner is free to have his own mares covered by his own stallion.

3. An owner wishing to take out a license for his stallion must notify his desire to the chief local authorities within a specified period.

4. In order to obtain a license the stallion must be brought before a Licensing Commission for examination. The Commission must then declare the stallion "fit" or "unfit" for stud purposes, and must grant or refuse the license accordingly.

The decision of the Committee is final, and from it there is no appeal.

5. The owner of a stallion which is declared "fit" for stud purposes receives from the Commission gratis a license in the form fixed by the regulations. This license entitles the stallion to stand at a fixed place, and to cover the class of mares described in the license certificate, for the period of one year.

In Galicia and Bukowina, however, in view of local conditions, licenses are granted for periods of one to three years.

6. The Licensing Committees are appointed by the respective local authorities for periods of from one to four years, according to the various provincial regulations.

7. The number of members and formation of these Committees vary in the different provinces.

The number of members varies between three and five. In some provinces a representative of the local authorities is attached to the Committee, and a representative of the State Stallion Depôt must be on the Committee, as well as a veterinary surgeon, either as a voting member or merely in order to give his professional opinion on the stallions brought before him. The other members are experts appointed by the local authorities in an honorary capacity.

8. The owner of a licensed stallion is obliged to issue a certificate (Deckzettel) to the owners of mares covered by his stallion, and to keep an accurate register of such mares.

The forms of these certificates and registers are defined in the licensing regulations, and are similar to those of the certificates issued, and of the registers kept by the managers of the Government covering stallions.

9. The amount of the fee to be charged per mare covered by a licensed stallion is left to be arranged by the parties interested.

10. Throughout the covering-season every licensed stallion is to be examined once a month, at Government expense, by a veterinary surgeon or farrier appointed for the purpose.

11. Whosoever uses an unlicensed stallion to cover mares other than his own, whether gratis or for a covering fee ; whosoever knowingly allows a mare in his possession to be covered by a unlicensed stallion ; or whosoever allows his entire colts of from one year old and upwards to be pastured with mares whatever their age ; or whosoever infringes the licensing regulations in any other respect, is to be punished according to the provisions of the regulations applicable to his case by a fine not exceeding 100 guldens (= £8 6*s.* 8*d.*)

The licensing regulations also contain provisions for the application of these penalties, and for appeals against the same.

The Ministry for Agriculture is charged with the execution of the licensing laws.

The local authorities are charged with the necessary surveillance, and with the prevention of any infringement of the laws in question.

The authorities of the State Stallion Depots have to report any case of an unlicensed stallion being used for stud purposes (except for the owner's mares) to the Ministry of Agriculture ; the local authorities are

then informed with a view to further procedure according to the circumstances of the case.

As already stated, licensed stallions are sometimes granted a State subvention when recognised as specially suitable for stud purposes in a given locality. This is especially the case with regard to cart stallions. The cases suitable for subvention are brought to the notice of the authorities of the Local State Stud, and by them to that of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Subventions are granted of 100 guldens (£8 6*s.* 8*d.*) for a period of three years; or of 100 guldens, with a yearly increase of 50 guldens, for a period of four years. The owner of the stallion obliges himself to keep him well, and to use him for his own and other people's mares during the period for which the subvention is granted. The stallion must cover a specified number of mares yearly, the covering-fee being fixed by the owner.

In 1891 licenses were granted to 383 stallions belonging to private owners, by which 16,110 mares were covered—*i.e.*, 42 mares per stallion.

In the same year subventions were granted to 135 licensed stallions.

Question 6.—Success, or otherwise, of Government Stud Farms.

The Austrian Government first began to take an active interest in horse-breeding in the reign of the Emperor Charles VI.

By a decree of 1736 the provincial authorities were directed to provide stallions suitable for getting remounts, and the working of very young horses was forbidden.

But the first great impulse to horse-breeding in Austria was given by a decree drawn up by the Empress Maria Theresa with her own hand in 1763; and since then the State has continued to encourage horse-breeding as far as possible.

By the above-mentioned decree Baron von Traichapelle was appointed superintendent in all matters connected with horse-breeding.

The existing State Studs at *Radautz* and *Piber* were established in 1792 and 1798 respectively. So their history extends over the last century.

Count Heinrich zir Hardegq, who became manager after the conclusion of Peace in 1815, was the first to systematise horse-breeding as carried on in the State Studs, and to manage it on really scientific principles. He imported at various times a number of thoroughbred Arab stallions, as well as English horses, bought either in England or in Germany. He improved the studs at Kisber and Mezöhegyes (in Hungary), and at the former he commenced breeding English thoroughbreds. Premiums were established both for stallions and mares, and stallions were distributed throughout the provinces. Hardegq aimed particularly at furnishing all remounts for the army from the country itself, and succeeded so well that, in 1848, the 21,000 horses required were all home-bred.

Hardegq was a great believer in Arab blood, but after his death in 1854 his successors began to use English thoroughbred blood more and more.

The following figures show that the efforts of the Government to encourage horse-breeding were successful.

In the Cis-Leithan territories (exclusive of Lombardy and Venice) there were :—

In 1819, 795,349 horses, giving 146 per square mile.
In 1869, 1,388,628 „ „ 255 „ „

In Hungary there were :—

In 1819, 897,573 horses, or 155 per square mile.
In 1870, 2,158,819 „ 369 „ „

Import and Export of Horses and Foals.

	Imported.	Exported.
In 1803,	13,788	1,252
In 1845,	12,741	13,285
In 1865,	7,607	21,417

Austrian horse-breeding was also greatly improved by the occasional supply of stallions from the Imperial studs at *Kladrub* and *Lippiza*.

In 1869 the care of the State studs and horse-breeding establishments was transferred from the Ministry of War to the Ministry of Agriculture.

The object of the preceding historical sketch is to show that the Government has, at any rate, been successful in increasing the stock of horses in the country, and in improving their quality—thereby ensuring a good supply of remounts for the army, and rendering great service to the agricultural class.

It is doubtful, however, whether the existing State studs at *Radautz* and *Piber* can be regarded as successful from all points of view. It appears that the percentage of foals (*i.e.*, the increase on the breeding stock) varies between 60 and 70 per cent., whereas in a stud the increase should be about 80 per cent. This may be partly due to the severity of the climate, and the great extremes of heat and cold. On the other hand, the increase of breeding-stock in the hands of farmers is much smaller. As the chief object of the State studs is to supply stallions for the various covering stations, and as both these, and the stallions at the studs, cover at an almost nominal fee, it is difficult to say, from a commercial point of view, whether they are successful or not. (At Radautz the Stud thoroughbred stallions cover at 30 guldens (£2 10*s.*) for thoroughbred, and 15 guldens for half-bred mares). There is no doubt, however, that the State studs have done much in raising the quality of the horses bred throughout the country, in preserving good local breeds, and in spreading the knowledge of breeding on scientific principles among the farmers.

Imperial Studs at Kladrub and Lippiza.

The Imperial Studs at *Kladrub* and *Lippiza* are successful in producing two very fine types of carriage-horse. The Kladruber horses are very large, showy animals, with great action, and are chiefly used in the Court carriages on State occasions. They are descended from Spanish and Italian stock; they are either black, or white, and stand as high as 178 c. m. (17½ hands). Attempts to improve the breed by crosses with English thoroughbreds have failed.

English thoroughbreds are also successfully reared at Kladrub, and for ten years the Imperial colours were most successful on the turf. The racing establishment there was given up in 1876, partly so as not to compete so heavily with private owners, and partly on account of the great expense entailed thereby.

Lippiza.

The Imperial Stud at Lippiza is situated at about an hour's drive from Trieste. The property was bought by the Archduke Charles in 1580; an Imperial stud was soon after established there, which is still flourishing, and which has produced the celebrated "Lippizaner" breed. The first breeding stock consisted of three "Brincos," six other selected stallions, and twenty-four brood mares, all of which were bought in Spain. To these were added Italian, Danish, and a few Arab sires. During the stormy years between 1797 and 1815 the stud suffered much from constant removals. In 1826 a considerable number of Arab stallions were imported, but stallions, belonging to the local "karst" breed, were also used. In 1857 two more Arab stallions and sixteen mares, purchased in the Syrian desert, were added to the stud, and with these pure Arab stock was bred. It was found, however, that the pure Arab was not so good for severe carriage work as the Lippizaner, and the Arab thoroughbred stock was therefore applied to cross the stud-breed. English thoroughbreds were also used for the same purpose, especially a stallion called "Northern-Light" by "Chanticleer," out of "Sunflower" by "Bay Middleton." The latter's

progeny, though good in themselves, lost the character of the Lippizaner breed, and the attempt to introduce thoroughbred blood was therefore abandoned.

The Lippizaner horses have a marked character, and are descended from Spanish, Italian, and Arab Stock, carefully crossed. They are long-bodied, short-legged animals, with good quarters, legs, and feet. They are usually grey (or bay), they have good action and excellent constitutions. In height they vary from 15 to 16 hands. In fact, they make remarkably good carriage horses, being very handsome, hardy, and fast.

REPORT ON THE BREEDING OF HORSES IN HUNGARY.

The enclosed report, published in 1896 by the Hungarian Minister of Agriculture, offers an account of the origin, progress, and present state of the Hungarian State Studs and the farms connected with these establishments.

There are four studs in Hungary which form State property, and are maintained by the Government for the promotion of horse-breeding.

When the stallions have reached the necessary age, they are brought to the stallion depôts from where they are yearly sent for a certain period of time to the covering stations.

There are eighteen stallion depôts and 946 covering stations distributed in the different parts of the country.

There were in total 2,838 stallions kept in 1896 at the State stallion depôts, of which about two-thirds were bred in the State studs and about one-third has been purchased from private breeders.

The covering fees paid to the Government at the covering stations vary between 1–10 florins (=1*s.* 4*d.*–15*s.* 4*d.*) per stallion.

Breeders are also at liberty to hire stallions from the stallion depôts for covering purposes.

The fees paid for the hire vary between 250–1,500 florins = about £20–£125.

Committees are formed in the different parts of the country with the view to encourage the breeding of horses by making acquainted the farmers with the object and the principles of rational breeding, and thus constituting a connecting link between the breeding establishments of the Government and the private farmers.

A further mode adopted by the Government for the encouragement of private breeders is continually to purchase from them a certain amount of stallions to be employed in the State establishments.

The Military authorities contribute to this encouragement by trying to avoid intermediaries and to procure the necessary supply of horses directly from private breeders.

It has proved to be a useful mode for the promotion of horse-breeding to sell a certain part of the stallions, purchased by the Government from private breeders, to communities at low prices and at convenient paying modalities.

Facilities for the transport of breeding stock are granted to farmers by the Hungarian State railways.

Prizes are distributed among the farmers for their encouragement to keep mares and foals.

Subsides are granted by the Government for the creation of common pastures (foal gardens) in the poorer communities of the country.

The Government has raised a fund for the promotion of horse-breeding, deriving its income from the tax imposed upon the "totalisateur" at the racing courses.

The State Budget for 1897 shows the following figures in connection with horse-breeding :—

——	Expenditure.		Receipts.	
	Flor.	£	Flor.	£
State Studs,	1,154,243 =	96,187	535,270 =	44,606
Stallion Depots,	1,470,051 =	122,504	618,330 =	51,528
Subsidies for Racing purposes,	30,000 =	2,500	—	
Subsidies for Breeding purposes, and for the creation of Foal-pastures,	40,000 =	3,333	—	
For the purchase of Covering Stock,	14,000 =	1,166	—	
Receipt from the Fund created for the promotion of Horse-breeding,	—		14,000 =	1,166
Stud Farms, including the Crown Domain from Gödöllö,	2,685,676 =	223,806	3,376,121 =	281,343

Registration.

Regular stud books are kept at the State studs.

The Hungarian Agricultural Society at Buda-Pesth introduced herd-books to be kept at their offices for the registration of the stallions and mares of private breeders.

The registration is not compulsory.

Explanatory details are to be found in the prints herewith enclosed, published by the Hungarian Agricultural Society, on the herd-book, and the regulations relating thereto.

HUNGARY.

It appears that the system of State encouragement to horse-breeding in Hungary and of managing the State studs is very similar to that followed in Austria.

In Hungary, however, thoroughbred stock is bred in the State studs, which is not the case in Austria.

There are four State studs in Hungary, viz. :—

Kisber.
Babolna.
Mezöhegyes.
Fogoras.

The estimates for the Department of the Hungarian Ministry for Agriculture charged with horse-breeding amount to 2,800,000 guldens for 1897 (£233,333).

As the official returns are only published in Hungarian it has not been possible, so far, to obtain further details.

M. de C. Findlay,

Vienna, March 19th, 1897.

REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN FRANCE.

1. The French Government spends annually about £86,000 on the encouragement of horse-breeding: the exact figures for the last two years are 2,097,250 francs (£83,890) in 1895, and 2,153,800 francs (£86,152) in 1896.

The above sums do not include an annual grant of 50,000 francs (£2,000), made to Algiers.

In addition to the above, various Towns and Departments in France spent 1,323,570 francs (£52,942) in 1895—probably about £54,000 last year—on shows and other purposes intended to encourage the breeding of horses.

2. The money granted by the Government was distributed in 1896 in the following manner:—

	Francs.	£ sterling.
Flat Races,	171,600	6,864
Trotting Races,	248,500	9,940
Races open to Colts only,	65,500	2,620
Races open to Fillies only,	81,600	3,264
Harness and Saddle Horse Shows,	49,600	1,984
Premiums to private Stallions,	600,000	24,000
Premiums to Colts and Fillies,	124,000	4,960
Premiums to Brood Mares,	621,500	24,860
Premiums to Thoroughbred Mares devoted to the production of Arab or Anglo-Arab stock.	54,500	2,180
District Shows,	110,000	4,400
Expenses incurred in marking private Stallions whose services are open to the public.	27,000	1,080
	frs. 2,153,800	£86,152

Various Towns and Departments assisted the breeding of horses as follows in 1895:—

	Francs.	£ sterling.
Flat Races, Steeplechases, and Trotting Races,	817,530	32,700
Harness and Saddle Horse Shows,	16,600	664
Local Shows,	489,440	19,577
	frs. 1,323,570	£52,941

It is probable that the above subsidies were more than maintained last year, but the returns are not yet procurable.

3. The amount of money spent by the Government on the encouragement of farmers and other private breeders of horses is included in the above enumerated sums, and there are no special subventions made to this class directly. Private breeders and farmers benefit, however, more especially from the premiums given to colts and fillies, brood mares and private stallions, as set forth in the preceding schedule of expenditure. They are also the chief gainers by the sums given in prizes at the district Horse Shows.

4. It will have been observed above that, under the headings of premiums to brood mares (621,500 francs), and premiums to thoroughbred mares devoted to the production of Arab or Anglo-Arab horses (54,500 francs), a gross sum of 676,000 francs (£27,040), is accorded as an inducement to keeping brood mares. The former of these totals represents the amount of money given in premiums to brood mares at shows, the latter gives the total value of the premiums, varying from 200 to 500 francs, granted to thoroughbred mares in certain districts of the Pyrenees, where they are too scattered about for it to be possible to assemble them in a show-yard. The premiums in this instance are given on the recommendation of the Government Stud Officials.

The Government does not give any other special encouragement for this purpose to private breeders.

5. Stallions, the property of private owners, must, if their services are open to the public, be examined by the technical Sanitary Commission, whose duty is to determine whether or not they are afflicted with roaring or intermittent ophthalmia. Only stallions that have been passed free of these two blemishes are authorized to cover public mares. It is the duty of the Prefects of the Departments to bring the mares to the notice of the breeders.

Such stallions are merely registered as "Accepted." There are, however, two other classes of private stallions, namely:—

(*a.*) "Approved" stallions which are recognised as capable of improving the breed of horses, and which receive an annual premium from the Government, varying from 300 francs (£12) to 2,000 francs (£80). It is these premiums which make up the total of 600,000 francs (£24,000) quoted in the expenditure schedule under the heading "Premiums to private stallions"; and

(*b.*) "Authorized" stallions which are judged good enough to maintain the breed of horses, though incapable of improving it. These horses do not receive premiums, but they have an official status which enables their products to take part in Shows subventioned by the State.

6. The Haras de Pompadour, in the Department of the Corrèze, is the only regular Government Stud Farm in France. Sixty thoroughbred mares are kept there which are solely intended for the production of Arab and Anglo-Arab horses. It is stated that the results are satisfactory.

In addition to the Stud Farm of Pompadour, the French Government possesses 22 stallion depots, containing 2,800 horses. These stallions stand during the covering season in the country districts in twos and threes, and their services are reserved—at a very

small covering fee—for mares belonging to private breeders. It is said that, thanks to this system, the production of horses in France is amply sufficient for the requirements of the army and trade.

Although not actually coming within the scope of the questions asked by the Commission on Horse-breeding in Ireland, it may be of interest to them to have certain supplementary data concerning horse-breeding in France laid before them.

The law of January 26, 1892, fixes the number of Government sires at 2,800, and this figure is maintained as nearly as possible in the following proportions:—550 thoroughbred sires (Arab, English, and Anglo-Arab), 1,850 half-bred sires, and 400 draught stallions. In 1895, the Government stallions covered 157,137 mares, as against 140,045 during the preceding season, a satisfactory increase, and a larger number than has been previously recorded. The receipts derived from the services of Government stallions amounted to 1,140,103 francs (£45,604), equivalent to a fee of about six shillings per mare.

The official returns for 1895 show that 1,215 sires, belonging to private owners, received certificates of approbation; of these 233 were thoroughbred, 502 half-bred, and 480 draught horses. A stallion standing at a higher covering fee than 100 francs (£4) is not entitled to a premium, though accorded a certificate of approbation. Eighty-seven thoroughbred and eight half-bred trotting sires were not given premiums for this reason. These "approved" sires covered 59,497 mares, an average of about 50 mares per horse.

One hundred and seventy-eight sires belonging to private persons were officially "authorized," a distinction which—as before explained—qualifies their stock to take part in shows supported by Government. These horses covered 5,995 mares in 1895, an average of about 34 mares per horse.

Of the private stallions presented to the Sanitary Commission for examination in 1895, 5,725 were accepted as free from the two blemishes (roaring and intermittent ophthalmia) prohibited by the law of August 14, 1885. The statistics do not state how many mares they covered.

The total number of mares covered in 1895 by (1) Government, (2) "Approved," and (3) "Authorized" stallions amounted to 222,849, an increase of 16,984 over the 205,865 mares covered by these three classes of horses in 1894.

The above figures would seem to show that horse-breeding is in a flourishing condition in France, but nevertheless the official returns give a decrease on the exportations of 1895 over those of 1894, and an increase on the importations. The exact totals for all classes of horses are:—

1894,	Importations,	21,031
1895,	„	36,467
1894,	Exportations,	22,326
1995,	„	21,484

It is said that this increase in the importation of horses may be partly assigned to the large numbers of cheap animals lately sent to Europe from America and Canada. The Director of Government Studs points out in his Report for 1895, herewith enclosed, that 222,849 mares were covered that year by Government "approved" or "authorized" stallions, as against 182,000 mares in 1888. He therefore concludes that either the number of horses used in France becomes more and more considerable every year, or that the unimproved production, that is to say, the number of horses bred from sires merely passed as sound by the Sanitary Commission, keeps on diminishing. The returns, however, do not give a sufficiently large reduction in this class to account for the fall in exportations, and the extraordinarily large rise in importations.

WALTER TOWNLEY.

Paris, 3rd March, 1897.

REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN ITALY.

British Embassy, Rome,
February, 25th, 1897.

SIR,—In compliance with instructions from Your Excellency, I have the honour to enclose a Preliminary Report on Horse-breeding in Italy, together with a sketch-map of the country indicating the situation of the central and other depots.

This report will furnish some of the information asked for in Lord Salisbury's Despatch, No. 4, marked Commercial, of the 28th January. I propose to send a further report, after personally visiting the Stud-farm at Pisa, and the Army Remount Depot at Grosseto. The information has been collected from the Annual Official Report for 1895, of the Minister of Agriculture; unfortunately, the report for 1896 has not yet been published, but will be ready shortly. I will notify any changes of importance that have taken place during the year, and at the same time forward a copy of the Italian Stud-book.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
CHARLES NEEDHAM, Colonel,
Military Attaché.

H. E. The Right Honorable
Sir Clare Ford, G.C.B., &c.

REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN ITALY.

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE—ROME HORSE DEPARTMENT, 1895.

Number of Stallions.

There were 582 stallions in the Government Horse Depots on January 1st, 1895. These were divided, according to their breeds, as follows:—

Breeds.				
Thoroughbreds,	English,	73	86	12·54 per cent.
	Eastern,	80		
	Anglo-Eastern,	6		
Three parts bred,			97	14·77 per cent.
Half-bred,			297	—
American Trotter,			1	67·88 per cent.
Heavy Draught,			28	—
				4·81 per cent.
Total,			582	

Classes

For breeding purposes they were divided as follows :—

Saddle Horses,	197	American and Russian Trotters,	24
Carriage Horses,	53	Heavy Draught,	28
Saddle and Light Draught,	280		
		Total,	582

Losses.

During 1895 there was a loss of 44 stallions, of which 19 died, and 25 were cast for the following causes :—

Breeds.	Died.	Cast.	Total.	Percentage.
Thoroughbreds, English,	2	3	5	7·66 per cent.
Thoroughbreds, Eastern,	4	2	6	
Thoroughbreds, Anglo-Eastern,	1	–	1	
Three parts bred,	3	8	11	
Half-bred,	8	11	19	
American Trotters,	–	1	1	
Heavy Draught,	1	–	1	
Total,	19	25	44	

Causes of Loss.

The causes of death, or reasons for casting, were as follows :—

Died, or were Slaughtered for		Cast for	
Apoplexy,	3	Various defects,	11
Pleuro-pneumonia,	2	Unprolific,	4
Colic,	4	Age and exhaustion,	4
Typhus,	3	Blindness,	11
Fracture of Limbs,	3	Amaurosis,	1
Hernia	1	Ophthalmia,	1
Castration,	1	Inflammation,	1
Operation,	1	Blood poisoning,	1
Glanders,	1	Bad temper,	1
Total,	19	Total,	35

Purchase of Stallions.

To replace these stallions, some were purchased in the country, and some abroad. The proceedings to regulate the purchase of stallions are described in the following order of the day, approved by the Council in 1892, and confirmed in 1893 :—

"In order to procure stallions for service in Italy, as far as possible in the country, the Government will indicate the places at which thoroughbred stallions may be offered for sale; the Government will not inquire into the price, but will offer what they consider fair. Half-bred stallions will be purchased in the same manner. Half-bred stallions purchased abroad will be procured, as far as possible, in England, failing the requisite numbers, in Germany or France."

Conditions of Purchase.

In June, 1895, the usual notice was issued for the purchase of three parts half-bred and Eastern stallions; the following conditions are worthy of notice :—

"With the exception of horses that have run in public races under the management of a recognised club, all horses must be tried under saddle, or in harness. The trial, which must be made at the greatest speed of which the horse is capable, will be directed by the Government Commission, and will extend to one mile and three furlongs. Grey horses will not be purchased, unless of exceptional merit. The Government will state the price they are ready to give for any stallio found suitable for their purpose."

Numbers Purchased.

One hundred and thirty-four stallions were shown for sale to the Government, being 35 less that in 1894.

The following table shows the number of stallions purchased and the places where they were shown to the Commissions :—

In Italy.	English Thoroughbreds.	Three parts bred English.	Half-bred Eastern.
Crema,	–	2	–
Ferrara,	–	2	–
Reggio Emilia,	–	4	–
Casalina (Deruta Perugia),	–	–	3
Pisa,	2	–	–
Rome,	–	2	5
Santa Maria Capua Vetere,	–	–	1
Salerno,	–	–	1
Sicily,	–	1	1
Sardinia,	–	–	2
Total,	2	11	13
In England,	–	11	–
Totals,	2	22	13
General Total,		37	

Cost of Stallions.

The 26 stallions purchased in Italy cost £3,437, an average of about £132 each ; the 11 purchased in England cost £2,858, an average of £259 each.

Proportion of Breeds.

The number of stallions at the Depots on December 31, 1895, was 575. The proportion of different breeds was established by the Council as follows :—

English Thoroughbreds,	12 per cent.
Thoroughbred Eastern and Anglo-Eastern,	14 „
Heavy Draught Horses,	5 „

Ages.

The ages of the stallions were :—

2 Year Olds,	1	7 Year Olds,	87	12 Year Olds,	28
3 „	13	8 „	62	13 „	17
4 „	56	9 „	32	14 „	25
5 „	34	10 „	60	15 „	31
6 „	94	11 „	35		375

Inspection of Colts.

The Administration, acting on the advice of the Council, in 1892, as to the most efficacious means of increasing the number of stallions in the country, so as to assist the Government Depots, ordered in 1895 an inspection of the colts that had been shown as two-year-olds in 1894, and had been considered likely to become good stallions ; of the 48 shown in 1894, 13 had been selected for further inspection ; of these 13, 4 were not shown, and 5 were purchased by the Government. In June, 1895, a special notice was issued to owners and breeders of horses, informing them of the conditions under which two-year-old colts would be inspected. The Administration assumes no responsibility at this preliminary inspection. The colts considered likely to become useful stallions are, if kept by the breeders, examined the following year, and may be purchased, if funds are available, if the colt continues to show the same qualities, and if he passes the prescribed trials.

SERVICE OF GOVERNMENT STALLIONS.

Number of Stallions serving Mares.

Five hundred and eighty-two stallions served mares in 1895 ; they were posted at 377 different stations. They covered in all 19,846 mares, an average of 34·09 mares to each stallion.

The following table shows the names of the central depots, and the number of stallions at each station :—

Name of District.	Number of Stations with			
	1 Stallion.	2.	3.	4 or more.
Crema,	10	27	9	5
Reggio Emilia,	18	13	6	–
Ferrara,	27	22	5	4
Pisa,	40	15	2	–
Santa Maria Capua,	63	14	4	–
Catania,	42	11	2	–
Ozieri,	25	11	1	1
Total,	225	113	29	10
	377 Stations.			

The following is the report on mares covered :—

Breed of Stallion.			Numbers.		Average.
			Stallions.	Mares.	
Thoroughbred,	English,	72	156	2,393	33·23
	Eastern,	78		2,151	27·61
	Anglo-Eastern,	6		204	34·00
Three parts and half-bred,			396	13,800	34·84
American Trotter,			1	32	32·00
Heavy Draught Stallions,			29	1,263	43·48
			582	19,843	34·09

Number of Mares refused.

During the season in the seven central depots, 319 mares were refused for the following reasons : 50 were under-sized, 40 were malformed, with serious defects, 15 had ophthalmia, 13 were broken-winded, 13 had tumours, 28 were not in use, 13 were vicious, 72 had infectious diseases, 1 was too young, 3 were already in foal, 1 was too in-bred. Besides these, 12 could not be served, because the stallion refused to cover them, 57 because the stallion was otherwise employed, 1 because the stallion was sick.

Service Fees.

The amount received for service of 19,846 mares was £11,819, divided as follows :—

		£	s.	d.	£
5	Mares at	64	0	0	320
37	,,	32	0	0	1,184
5	,,	2	8	0	12
258	,,	1	12	0	413
1,021	,,	1	0	0	1,021
18,520	,,	0	9	7	8,869
Total, 19,846					£11,819

"Melton."

By advice of the Council, for the service of the thoroughbred stallion "Melton," the time for declaring mares covered by him to be barren was extended to January 31st, when half the service fee was returned. The measures taken by the Ministry for the establishment of new stations, for the eventual suppression of some now existing, for an increased allowance of stallions where there are a larger number of mares, and for the posting of stallions to the different stations, are as follows :—

New Stations.

"A new station cannot be established except in unusual circumstances, unless it be at least 12 miles distant from one already existing. The Directors of Depots should ascertain whether, in the locality where a new station is asked for, there is a sufficient number of good-sized mares to justify the detachment of one or more stallions. Those stations should not be retained where less than 35 mares are brought for service, especially if there are other stations in the neighbourhood where mares can be conveniently taken. When at the end of a season it is found that at a station where one stallion is kept, and the number of mares is less than 35, and the cause is not attributable to any defect in the stallion, and is not of a transitory nature, the Director should warn the Mayor that the following spring the station will only be kept up on trial, and will be suppressed, if the limit of numbers is not attained. Or, he may suggest to the Ministry the immediate abolition of the station. An increased number of stallions may be allowed, when it has been ascertained that during the season more than 45 mares have been brought to the station."

Uniform Type of Stallion.—Leasing to Private Breeders.—Staff.

In order to ensure breeding of a decided and uniform character, and the production of horses suitable for certain districts, it is advisable not to remove stallions often from their own station, nor to change the class of animal. A stallion should not be removed from a station, unless for particular reasons, until he has served there for at least three or four years. With regard to the leasing of stallions to private breeders, the hirer is bound to pay beforehand the service fees for as many mares as the Ministry have assigned to the stallion selected for the station. The number of mares assigned to each stallion depends upon his general condition, and may be increased, if it is not likely to affect his constitution. The work at the depots was done in 1895 by the following staff:—1 Lieutenant-Colonel, 1 Major, 5 Captains, 7 Lieutenants, and 7 Veterinary Surgeons, forming the managing body; 331 horse-keepers (of whom 241 were old soldiers), 20 Sergeants, 156 Corporals, and 221 soldiers attached to the depots; 91 soldiers were brought in from cavalry regiments during the serving season, and 24 civilian grooms were taken on for a few days, in the place of soldiers who had fallen ill, or were unable to do duty for other reasons."

Expenses.

The following three tables show the expenses in men, forage, and stabling for the seven central depots :—

No. I.—STAFF.

Officers.		Veterinary Surgeons.		Soldiers.	Horse-keepers.		Total.
Pay and Allowances.	Travelling Expenses.	Pay and Allowances.	Travelling Expenses.	Pay.	Pay.	Travelling Expenses.	
£ 1,990	£ 307	£ 336	£ 7	£ 10,306	£ 4,584	£ 292	£ 17,842

Cost for each Stallion, £31 (circ.).

No. II.—FORAGE.

Oats.	Barley.	Straw Feeding.	Straw Bedding.	Bran.	Meal.	Beans.	Green Stuff.	Hay.	Total.
£ 6,255	£ 1,369	£ 59	£ 2,692	£ 562	£ 196	£ 346	£ 1,254	£ 3,106	£ 15,839

Daily Ration, about 1*s.* 6*d.* Cost of each Stallion, £27 10*s.*

No. III.—GENERAL EXPENSES.

	£		£
Shoeing,	614	Special visits to Sick Horses,	2
Saddlery and Harness,	886	Allowance to Members of Council,	24
Stables and Coach Houses,	418	Fire Insurance,	112
Lighting,	184	Inspections and Journeys,	84
Fuel,	337	Medicines,	302
Lodgings,	151	Sundry Expenses,	2,166
Carriage,	983	Total,	£6,263

Cost of each Stallion, £12.

In all each stallion cost for 1895—

	£	*s.*	*d.*	
Expenses of Staff,	31	0	0	
Forage,	27	10	0	
General Expenses,	12	0	0	
Total,	£70	10	0	(circ.)

The expenses of the seven depots were fixed at £1,353 for 1895; these expenses are borne three-fourths by the provinces included in the management of each depot, in proportion to the number of stations, and one-fourth by the communes in the customs district of which the depot is situated.

General prosperity.

On the whole the condition of horse-breeding may be considered satisfactory. The breeders are doing better, and there is more trade in horses, which is essential to the prosperity of the industry.

Sardinia.

In Sardinia, for instance, the Director writes: "That many more foals are bred there; the breeders are employing a better system; certainly, there is but little stabling, but that does not apply to horses only; other animals have to live in the open. Consequently, the breeders are anxious to sell their foals as two-year-olds; if they do not sell them, there is great difficulty in keeping the foals in the enclosures. The Government Depot is, whatever may be said to the contrary, an encouragement, and even a necessity in Sardinia."

Sicily.

Horse-breeding in Sicily is also doing well. The Director at Catania writes: "The Military Commission bought 125 good foals, and might well buy 250 more excellent two-year-olds."

Pisa.

In the District of Pisa, and especially in the Provinces of Pisa, Grosseto, and Rome, the breeding of horses continues to improve. It is from private breeders, and those who have sufficient means and technical knowledge, that the Military Authorities buy really good colts; we must not forget that the greater portion of these breeders use stallions belonging to the depot, or their descendants. Another reason for their prosperity in this district is the number of good mares, mostly bred by Government stallions

Crema, Ferrara, Reggio.

Good progress is also being made in the three districts of Crema, Ferrara, and Reggio d'Emilia. Crema is the most important, that of Reggio the least. In these districts, which include, besides the Marche, the whole valley of Padua, breeders care less for selling horses to the army than in other places. In a great part of Lombardy, and to a certain extent in Venetia and Upper Emilia, a good market is found for their horses, both in the country, and for exportation; the best of these are sold at good prices, and make a fine show in the largest Italian towns, where they are passed off as coming from abroad, and are doubtless paid for as such.

S. Maria di Capua.

The reports from Santa Maria di Capua are less satisfactory; this district includes the whole southern Mediterranean and Adriatic provinces, except Aquila, which belongs to the Pisa district; the Abruzzi will henceforward belong to it. The Director writes: "Breeders of horses do not consider their profession remunerative; they have an idea that the Government ought to buy *all* the good horses fit for the army, forgetting that though many are required, all cannot be disposed of. Hence, many neglect the breeding of horses for that of mules, which is more profitable. A mule, at twelve months old, is worth from £6 to £8, whereas a foal of the same age will rarely fetch more than £4. A three-year-old mule is worth more than £20, a horse of the same age can seldom be sold for that amount in the place where it is bred. The breeding of mules is also of great importance in Sicily, where a quiet and hardy beast of burden is a necessity."

Ferrara.

The Director at Ferrara writes: "Whilst in Lombardy, and especially in the province of Cremona, numbers of horses are bred for exportation, the contrary is the case in the province of Verona; though a smaller number are bred, a considerably greater proportion are reared there. The agricultural owners in this province, whose fields produce good crops, and in agricultural rotation excellent clover pasture for several months of the year, go to Cremona, and buy a considerable number of foals, which they rear on their farms. The result is very satisfactory, for colts reared in Cremona soon become weak and anæmic, with bursal enlargements, and are decimated by periodic ophthalmia; whereas, with change of food and climate, they become more lively, and develop good muscle, fibre, and tendons."

Croatian Horses.

The Director at Reggio mentions the importation of small horses from Croatia and Dalmatia. Reports from Ferrara and Capua also allude to them. These small horses have certainly some advantages; their low price, some at £4, the better class at from £8 to £10, their endurance, speed, good temper, and utility for saddle or light draught. The freight from Dalmatia to Italy is under £1; they are brought over in boat loads, 40 at a time, and are much used by farmers and peasants, as also for drawing the public carriages in almost all the towns of the southern Adriatic provinces.

Exportation.

The Director at Pisa mentions the exportation of horses of all ages suitable for light draught or saddle, and which increases annually. They are purchased by French dealers, and the trade is of benefit to owners, who, for various reasons, have been unable to sell their horses to the Government.

Brabant and Ardennes Stallions.

In Lombardy, the best market, and the highest prices are found for foals got by stallions from Brabant and the Ardennes. At six months old they are very well grown; but it does not follow that this type of stallion is most suitable for the whole district.

Hackney Stallions.

For the district of Crema, and the greater part of Ferrara, especially along the River Po, the best stallion is the Hackney—stout, strong-limbed, and well-shaped.

Eastern Stallions in Sardinia.

The best type of stallion for Sardinia is undoubtedly the Eastern, either pure or cross-bred; they do well there, and are popular.

The same reasoning should apply to Sicily, but great difficulty is found in using them there; breeders consider them too small, and prefer a larger animal, whose produce realize better prices. The Anglo-Eastern cross, which is somewhat larger, is the most popular.

English Thoroughbreds.

In Pisa and Emilia the English thoroughbred is increasing in popularity; in the former district no less than 16 stallions of this breed served in 1895.

SERVICE OF STALLIONS BELONGING TO PRIVATE OWNERS AND APPROVED BY GOVERNMENT.

Regulations.

The regulations passed in 1888 for the approval of stallions belonging to private breeders remain in force; the following article was added in 1893:—"The provincial Commissions may refuse to pass a stallion on account of vice, or any malformation likely to cause deterioration in the breed."

Numbers.

In 1895 there were 715 stallions belonging to private owners approved for public service. Of these there were:—

Breeds.

Thoroughbred English,	32
Half bred,	111
Italian,	328
Eastern,	74

and the remainder of every other breed and country. From the 715 must be deducted 3 that died, and 67 that did not serve public mares, leaving 645, which covered 17,945 mares, an average of 27·82 for each stallion. In 1894 there were 876 stallions shown for approval, of which 148 were rejected. In 1895 there were 875 shown, and 160 rejected.

The following table shows the names of the seven central Government depôts, of the provinces connected with them, the number of approved private stallions, and of mares served by them in 1895:—

TABLE showing numbers of approved private Stallions, and of Mares served by them in 1895.

Depots.	Provinces.	Stallions.	Mares.
Crema,	*Cuneo, *Turin, *Alessandria, Novara, Pavia, Milan, Como, Sondrio, Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, *Porto Maurizio, *Genoa.	81	3 502
Reggio d'Emilia,	Piacenza, Parma, Reggio, Modena, Bologna, Ravenna, Forli, Pesaro, Ancona, Macerata, Ascoli, Piseno.	54	1,752
Ferrara,	*Mantua, Verona, Vicenza, Belluno, Udine, Rovigo, Venice, Padua, Treviso, Ferrara.	103	3,094
Pisa,	Massa, Carrara, Lucca, Florence, Pisa, Arezzo, Siena, *Leghorn, Grosseto, Perugia, Rome, Aquila.	87	2,702
Santa Maria di Capua,	Teramo, Chieti, *Campobasso, Foggia, Bari, Lecce, Caserta, *Naples, Benevento, *Avellino, Salerno, *Potenza, Catanzaro, *Cosenza, *Reggio, Calabria.	138	2,240
Catania,	Palermo, Messina, Catania, Syracuse, Caltanissetta, Girgenti, Trapani.	109	2,173
Ozieri,	Cagliari, Sassari,	73	2,482
	Total,	645	17,945

N.B.—In Provinces marked * there was no public service.

Causes of Reduction in Numbers of Private Stallions.

The number of approved private stallions is considerably less than in previous years. This may be explained by the fact that since 1894 the provincial Commissions have been more strict in their requirements. There were many complaints against their decisions, but the Central Administration were convinced they had not exceeded their duties. Formerly many owners could get their horses passed, even if they were not considered likely to improve the breed; now, the quality of horses is far superior, though the number is smaller, and the Government is bound to provide stallions. There is no fear of harm being done by the concurrence of Government and private stallions, always provided that the latter are really good animals, and not only free from malformation but from vice. The Government are glad enough, if there are sufficient private stallions for the use of breeders, to send the few they have at their disposal elsewhere. There are so many places where stallions are in demand, that there is no fear of the supply exceeding the demand.

Reports from various Districts.

The reports from the different districts on this subject vary considerably. It is reported from Crema that private breeding, which is regarded with greater confidence when the Government have approved the stallions, is increasing, and the competition with the Government stud is serious.

Ferrara.

From Ferrara it is reported that among the private stallions there are many excellent thoroughbreds and good American trotters, but they do not compete seriously with Government horses. At Reggio the private stallions are "fairly satisfactory."

Pisa.

From Pisa the report says:—"The co-operation of private breeders has been of immense use in improving the produce, especially since the new regulation has been in force; it is a great pity their number should be decreasing, at a time when we cannot increase the numbers of our stallions."

S. Maria di Capua.

From Santa Maria di Capua it is reported that private breeding is prejudicial in consequence of the inferior class of the stallions, and is besides injurious to the service of the good animals provided by Government.

Catania.

At Catania, the opinion is that the Commissions approve of stallions not calculated to improve the breed.

Sardinia.

There is no report from Ozieri, in Sardinia, as to private breeding, so we may conclude there is no deterioration. From another part of the island we hear that owners appreciate the Government horses, and are anxious to use them; this would be satisfactory, if we did not also know that small owners frequently have recourse to private stallions on account of the low fee and easier payments.

General Remarks.

However much some of the over-zealous officials may depreciate private breeding, there is no doubt its conditions are far more satisfactory than formerly. There is only one fact to be deplored—the law is too often evaded, and it is impossible to exercise sufficient vigilance to prevent offences against the law increasing in number.

GENERAL RESULTS OF SERVICE.

The number of mares covered by Government and private stallions was 912 more than in 1894. In 1895, 19,846 mares were covered by Government stallions, and 17,945 by private stallions; total, 37,791.

TABLE showing Results of Government Stallions' Service, 1894:—

Mares Covered.	Live Foals.	Slipped Foals.	Pregnant Mares.		Total Pregnant.	Barren Mares.	Not reported.
			Sold.	Died.			
19,756	8,568	1,703	486	407	11,164	6,050	2,542

From this we gather that the proportion of foals to mares covered was 43·37 per cent., and that 56·50 per cent. of the mares were in foal. But if we count those not reported, we may assume that 64·86 per cent. of the mares were in foal, and 49·77 per cent. of foals born.

As the number of mares covered in 1894 by Government and private stallions was 36,879, we may estimate the produce at about 18,400.

ARMY REMOUNTS.

Purchases for Army.

In 1895 the military authorities purchased 3,543 young horses, of which 2,980 were foals, for re-stocking the young horse depots, and for remounting the cavalry, artillery, and engineers.

Horses fit to join regiments were posted as follows:—

Cavalry,	40
Artillery,	457
Engineers,	66
Total,	563

Young Horse Depots.

The remaining 2,980 were distributed among the young horse depots, of which there were then six, but four of them have since been done away with. On December 31st, 1895, the depots contained 3,955 young horses; this was after the remounts had been posted to the regiments.

INDIRECT ENCOURAGEMENT OF HORSE-BREEDING.

RACES AND HORSE SHOWS.

Encouragement of Horse-breeding.

In consequence of the state of public finances in 1894 no prizes were offered by the Ministry in 1895. The following were the sums granted in 1894:—

To	By Racing Clubs.	By Ministry.
	£	£
Flat Races,	12,672	1,600
Steeplechases,	2,318	1,600
Trotting Races,	1,600	560
Total,	16,590	3,960

The amount given to race meetings managed by recognised racing clubs in 1895:—

Subscribers.	Flat Races.	Steeplechases.	Trotting Races.	Total.
	£	£	£	£
The King and Royal Family,	1,120	600	—	1,720
Jockey Club,	1,060	—	—	1,060
Steeplechase Club,	—	1,712	—	1,712
Racing Clubs,	11,897	2,440	1,580	15,917
Municipalities,	260	20	102	382
Entrance Fees, &c.,	5,550	824	3	6,377
Total,	19,887	5,596	1,685	27,168

IMPORTATION AND EXPORTATION OF HORSES FROM 1885 TO 1895.

The figures are taken from "The Commerce of the Kingdom of Italy," published by the Ministry of Finance.

Year.	Importation.	Exportation.	Year.	Importation.	Exportation.
1885	21,792	2,564	1891	13,775	1,387
1886	18,556	2,896	1892	12,224	960
1887	14,950	1,898	1893	10,713	1,102
1888	19,567	1,023	1894	11,768	1,581
1889	25,739	1,116	1895	314,818	3,481
1890	20,105	1,538			

The increase in the importation of horses is entirely due to Austria-Hungary, and is due to the importation of the small horses from the opposite Adriatic coast, which come to our harbours in the south, in the Marche, and Emilia. This year exportation has also increased, especially among high-class horses, and foals that are sold at especially remunerative prices.

ITALIAN STALLIONS IN OTHER COUNTRIES.

The following Table shows the number of Government stallions exported from Italy, and mares covered by them in various countries that have State-breeding studs.

TABLE showing number of Italian stallions in other countries:—

Country.	Year.	Italian Stallions.	Mares Covered.
France, . . .	1895	2,750	157,000
Prussia, . . .	1893	2,475	136,138
Austria, . . .	1894	2,068	94,265
,, . . .	1895	2,112	94,265
Hungary, . . .	1892	2,646	94,265
Bavaria, . . .	1893	507	23,935
Saxony, . . .	1886	90	935

Rome, January 28th, 1896.

II.—REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN ITALY.

Army remounts at Grosseto.

The remount establishment at Grosseto, which is the largest of the six in Italy, is situated about four miles from the town of Grosseto, on the Rome-Pisa railway, and about 120 miles from Rome.

Extent of estate.—Roads.—Enclosures.

The estate, which belongs to the Government, consists of about 18,000 acres of pasture and arable land; it has been almost entirely reclaimed from the marshes which extended to the sea, and a portion of it is still undrained, though a considerable sum of money is annually spent on work for reclaiming a larger extent of ground; the estate is perfectly flat, and nearly surrounded by a range of hills; good carriage roads, made by the military engineers, intersect it in various directions, but another road is badly wanted, for, during the inundations caused by the bursting of a dyke, last winter, a circuit of ten miles was necessary to rescue horses on the confines of the estate. The fields are separated by strong timber fencing, each pasture meadow being about five acres in extent.

Crops.—Oxen.

The herbage is fairly good, and 5,000 tons of hay were cut this year. The oats, though rather long in the husk, are heavy and bright; the farm is entirely self-supporting, and besides supplying the necessary forage, furnishes several of the other depots with hay and corn. Over 400 of the large grey Italian oxen are bred here, and are used on the farm, some of them being occasionally sent to the other establishments in Italy.

Sheds and buildings.

The buildings are plain whitewashed or red brick blocks, and consist of lodgings for the staff, stables for harness and farm horses, pharmacy, sick horse stable, &c.; at intervals of about half a mile sheds with tiled roofs, 80 yards long by 15 wide, are erected to shelter the hay racks where the horses feed; these sheds have no lateral walls; at present there are only twelve, but their number is yearly being increased. The corn is placed in open troughs in the fields, with room for four horses to feed at each trough.

Staff.

The Staff consists of one Lieut.-Colonel or Major, one Captain, one Veterinary Captain, one Veterinary Lieutenant, one Accountant-Lieutenant, and two Clerks; besides these, thirty-six herdsmen are employed, each receiving £3 per month, lodging and fuel; at certain busy times cavalry soldiers from various regiments are also employed.

Labour.

The farm is cultivated by hired labourers, at wages of 2*s.* per day, but as malarial fever is prevalent from July to October, great difficulty is found in providing labourers for the hay and corn harvest, and men have to be paid as much as 4*s.* per day with food and lodging.

Rations.

The horses' rations vary from four pounds to eight pounds of oats per day, and unlimited hay, during the winter. The hay is coarse and of poor quality, owing to the difficulty in getting it cut at the proper time.

Purchase of horses.—Price.—Numbers.

The remount horses are purchased between the months of April and June by a Committee composed of the officer commanding the depot, the Captain attached, the Veterinary Captain, and a cavalry officer detailed by the Ministry of War. Notices are previously issued to all towns in the district, informing proprietors of the date and place at which horses may be brought for inspection; as a rule, only three and four-year olds are purchased; the price is fixed by the Ministry of War, and depends on the amount available in the army budget for the purpose; the average is £24 for three-year olds, and £32 for four-year olds; it is calculated that a colt from the age of three to four years costs £6 for his keep, including all expenses. The maximum number kept at Grosseto is 3,000, and at the end of December, by which time those considered fit have been drafted to their regiments, the number is reduced to 1,200.

Height.

The minimum size for three-year olds is 14 hands and half an inch, for four-years olds, 14 hands 2½ inches.

Distribution to regiments.

The horses are generally kept in droves of about twenty-five, and are of every breed, size, and colour; the smallest are sent to the hussars, the next in size to the lancers, while the heaviest are detailed to the artillery, engineers, and transport corps.

The officer commanding the Cavalry School at Pinerolo has the right to select any horse he may require for the school; after him the officer commanding the regiment of horse artillery takes his choice; the remaining horses are distributed to the regiments by the officer commanding the depot.

Condition.—Diseases.

The horses I saw (about 150) were probably looking at their worst, having only just recovered from the effects of a severe winter in the open, during which they have run absolutely wild, sometimes up to their knees in mud; this mud becomes hardened in summer to a consistency of brick, the result being many strains and fractures of limbs. The mortality (about six per cent.) is caused chiefly by pneumonia and the results of castration, for proprietors decline to take the risk and expense of castrating their colts before they are sold to the Government.

Methods of examining.

The horses, though in poor condition, looked hard and healthy, and most of them had fairly good action; their very existence is an instance of the survival of the fittest, for those that have pased a winter in the open will not suffer from exposure to the most severe weather. The great defect is want of size and substance, the heavier horses show great want of breeding. It is contended that in a mountainous country like Italy, large horses are useless. There is no doubt the cavalry horses have great powers of endurance when carrying heavy weights and doing long marches, as I observed during the manœuvres in 1895, and their good condition is certainly not due to attention in grooming or riding. Though sent to their regiments when four and a half years old, they are never used at manœuvres until six years old. They are sent from the depot perfectly unbroke, never having even had a halter on them. When it is necessary to examine them for medical treatment or to measure them, they are driven into an enclosure, from which a narrow passage leads to a corridor made of iron lattice work, with a padded roof, just wide enough to hold horses in single file; when the leader has reached the end of the corridor wooden bars are passed through the sides in front of, and behind each horse, so that he cannot move in any direction; the leader is exactly under a standard, which by a pulley mechanism registers the height on the wall of a shed, where an officer sits at a desk and writes a full description of the animal; the door in front of the leader is then opened, he passes into another enclosure, the door is closed, and the next horse takes his place under the standard.

Unsound horses.

Horses that are found to be unsound, or in any way defective, are retained at the depot for the use of the herdsmen or for farm work; some 150 are so employed.

Other remount depots in Italy.

I mentioned in my report of February 26th that four of the six horse depots in Italy had been suppressed, but the original intention to do so has not been carried out, and the other five still exist, though on a smaller scale than Grosseto; they are at Persano, near Naples; Bonorva, in Sardinia; Palmanova, near Udine; Portovecchio, near Modena; and Scordia, near Catania, in Sicily.

Stallion depot at Pisa.

The Government stallion depot at Pisa is situated on the Lung' Arno at the end of one of the principal thoroughfares of the town. The stabling for 130 horses originally belonging to Leopold, Grand Duke of Tuscany; there is a large airing ground, about an acre in extent, laid down in turf and gravel roads, where the horses are exercised for an hour and a half daily.

"Melanion" and "Workington."—Other stallions.

At the time of my visit, March, 1897, there were two thoroughbred English stallions, "Melanion" and "Workington," which have been bought by the Government to replace "Melton," who was last year resold to England, to the great regret of all good judges of horses in Italy. Many of the other stallions had been sent to their stations in the district, but some fifteen remained, all of which will be sent to out-lying stations before the end of the month; almost every variety of breed was represented, half-bred English, pure Arab, cross between English and Arab, Italian and Arab, pure Italian, Hackney and Italian, American trotter, &c., but I cannot say that, in my opinion, there was a really good-looking horse amongst them, excepting the two English thoroughbreds.

Defects in system of breeding.

The great fault of Italian horse-breeding appears to be the tendency to use Arab blood; the native mares are stout, active, wiry animals, but they have bad shoulders, narrow quarters, and are deficient in substance, all of which defects are predominant in the Arab, except in the very best, and of these there seem to be few, if any, in Italy. The one special attribute of the Arab, power of endurance, is already possessed by the native Italian race, and it would appear unnecessary to reproduce it in excess. Probably the very best type of animal to breed from in the first instance would be "Workington," and by crossing his descendants with a half-bred hunter sire a very valuable class of animal might be produced; unfortunately the service fee for "Workington," £12, is absolutely prohibitive for the Italian farmer, whose means will not permit him to spend more than ten shillings, or at the most £2 on breeding horses. The thoroughbreds are only used by owners of racehorses; they have each covered five mares this season, and it is doubtful whether they will serve more than ten each altogether. "Melanion's" fee is £24.

Andred.

"Andred," the English thoroughbred, is still kept at Pisa; he is now twenty-seven years of age, and though he served four mares last season, he is practically useless.

Chances of improvement in Breeding.

It is to be feared little improvement will be made in horse-breeding in Italy until the Government decide to keep some really good mares to breed from, and use their sons to serve in the rural districts at a low fee.

Rural Station at Vecchiamo.

I drove out to Vecchiamo, the nearest rural station, about five miles from Pisa, where two stallions are kept during the season; they are cross-breds, one by an English Hackney, out of an Italian mare, the other by an American trotter; they are probably useful for producing small harness horses. The arrangements are very primitive; the stallions are kept in two fairly good loose boxes, which open on to a yard some thirty feet square; they are under the care of a horse-keeper, who keeps the register, and reports to the Director at Pisa, who makes occasional inspections of all the stations in the district.

CHARLES NEEDHAM, Colonel,
Military Attaché.

British Embassy, Rome,
March 23, 1897.

REPORT ON HORSE-BREEDING IN PRUSSIA.

Introductory.

In a memorandum published by the Royal Ministry of Agriculture in 1896, the position held by the Government in regard to horse-breeding is described as follows :—

> "Horse-breeding in Prussia is mainly dependent upon the stud maintained by the Government, which provides almost all the sires required by private breeders.
>
> "According to the cattle census in 1893, the total number of foals born in 1892 was 104,189, to produce which about 180,000 mares must have been covered. The stallions belonging to the Government rural studs (Landgestüte) covered in 1891, 121,887, and in 1892, 126,346 mares. The task of the stud administration has become from year to year more extensive and more difficult ; as it is no longer merely a question of providing stallions suitable to the breeding of horses for military purposes, but also of considering other requirements, notably the demand for heavy draught horses, apart from the fact that the military authorities themselves now require greater variety for different arms of the service—from the light cavalry to the heavy artillery horse.
>
> "In addition to this the depressed condition of agriculture has induced many land owners to devote greater attention to horse-breeding, in order to cover the losses caused by the fall of prices in other branches of production. To meet this upward movement in horse-breeding, the Government Stud Department has found it necessary to increase the number and extent of their studs, and the number of stallions kept for service in the country."

Expenditure included in Estimates of Ministry of Agriculture.

The sums expended by the State in Prussia for the encouragement of horse-breeding fall under two different heads, viz. : (1) those included in the General Estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture for prizes and bounties, &c. ; and (2) the separate estimate for the Government Stud Department.

The Estimates of the Minister of Agriculture for 1896-97, contain the following items in this respect under ordinary expenditure :—

	£
1. Fund for awarding prizes at horse races,	10,500
2. Fund for prizes for the improvement of the breed of Stallions and Mares which are the property of Associations or of private persons ; also for bounties on the importation of thoroughbred stud horses and kindred objects, ...	9,000
3. For foal pastures, ...	171
Total, . .	19,671

NOTE.—Any surplus remaining over from the former fund is added to the second, and can be carried forward, together with any surplus in the latter, for use in the following year.

The amount voted in the Budget for 1895–96 was identical.

Under the heading of "Non-recurrent and Extraordinary Expenditure," the same Estimates for 1895–96 and 1896–97, each contain an item of £3,500 as an "extraordinary supplement to the fund for prizes for the improvement of the breed of stallions, &c." (No 2 above). This brings the total of money voted for such purposes in each of these two years up to £23,171, and in the Estimates for 1897–98, which have recently been laid before the Landtag, the same amount is demanded.

The reasons which moved the Ministry of Agriculture to ask for the extraordinary supplement are stated in the Estimates for 1895–96, as follows :—

> "The present depressed condition of agriculture renders it necessary to give all possible encouragement to efforts directed towards the improvement of (among other things) horse and cattle breeding.
>
> "The Horse-breeding Fund is almost entirely handed over to the Agricultural Associations for prizes at horse shows, and for assisting the importation of good breeding material for general purposes. A very small portion of it is assigned to the importation of thoroughbred horses.
>
> "In all the branches for which this extraordinary vote is asked, the necessity of increased expenditure has made itself felt.
>
> "As regards horse-breeding, the object must be to make the country as independent as possible of importation from abroad in regard to horses for ordinary use, and at the same time to encourage in certain provinces the breeding of horses suited to military purposes.
>
> "As it is impossible to foresee whether the conditions which make this increased expenditure necessary will be permanent ones, the amount required is claimed under Extraordinary Expenditure."

Mode of application of sums granted through the Ministry of Agriculture for the encouragement of horse-breeding.

The prizes granted by the Ministry of Agriculture take the form of (1) honorary prizes (cups), (2) money awards, and (3) free covering tickets for brood mares. It is customary to give honorary prizes to the large landowners and reserve the money awards for the smaller breeders. In the province of Silesia all the money available is distributed in the form of free covering tickets. In some parts of the country a large part of the sums granted by the State for the encouragement of horse-breeding is applied to assisting private breeders to purchase good brood mares and foals. In consequence of these awards the fact that a due consideration of descent is the true basis of breeding is becoming more and more appreciated, and has led to the establishment of stud-books and to the formation of associations of horse-breeders. Common action has also in many districts been initiated with a view to breeding towards a special required type, and good results have been attained in this way in the breeding of heavy cart horses in the Rhine Province.

Grants are also made out of Government funds to assist breeders to procure common runs and foal pastures, and to maintain public breaking-in establishments, which enable the breeders to sell their young horses properly broken-in for riding or driving without the intervention of a dealer.

The Government grants distributed through the local agricultural associations for all the above-mentioned purposes amounted on each foal born to an average of 1*s.* 10*d.* in 1895–96 and 2*s.* 5*d.* in 1896–97.

Government Stud Farms.

The Government Stud Department administers four principal stud farms and seventeen provincial establishments or rural studs (Landgestüte), where stallions only are kept for service in the district.

At the time when the Estimates for 1896–97 were drawn up the principal stud farms possessed:—

—	Stallions.	Brood Mares.	Colts and Fillies.
Trakehnen,	15	350	1,042
Graditz,	10	190	524
Beberbeck,	5	100	359
Neustadt a/Dosse,	1	20	–
	31	660	1,925

In the Estimates for 1897–98 the number of brood mares at Neustadt a/D. is given at 30, and there are 32 colts and fillies. The number of the latter at Beberbeck had fallen to 306, and their total number to 1,904. The remaining figures are the same.

The seventeen rural studs had a total of 2,603 stallions, the number varying from 235 in the Hanoverian to 100 in the Westphalian stud, and averaging 153 for each.

The Estimates for 1897–98 give the total number of stallions at 2,670.

In 1887 the principal stud farms then existing owned the following areas of land:—

TRAKEHNEN (founded in 1732):—

Arable,	6,577 acres.
Meadows,	2,733 „
Pasture,	230 „
Total,	9,540 „

GRADITZ:—

Arable,	1,238 acres.
Meadows,	1,695 „
Pasture,	15 „
Total,	2,948 „

BEBERBECK:—

Arable,	425 acres.
Meadows and Pasture,	1,621 „
Forest-land,	128 „
Total,	2,174 „

The acreage occupied by the stud farms has not changed materially since 1887. To the newly re-established stud farm at Neustadt-on-the-Dosse 741 acres were assigned from domain and forest lands, which originally belonged to it. (It was founded in 1788, suppressed in 1875, and re-established in 1896.)

The following Tables show the general results of the working of the three principal Government Stud Farms during the years 1893–95:—

TRAKEHNEN.

Year.	Stallions.	Brood Mares.	Living Foals Born.		Kept as Stallions for Rural Studs.	Kept as Brood Mares.	Supplied to Royal Stables.	Horses Sold.	
			Colts.	Fillies.				Old.	Young.
1893,	15	351	130	106	41	29	24	25	96
1894,	17	356	151	129	47	46	22	16	76
1895,	17	350	124	110	42	37	26	43	63

GRADITZ.

1893,	10	185	66	59	21	17	1	28	49
1894,	10	174	46	58	20	14	1	14	55
1895,	10	165	42	64	13	16	–	6	64

BEBERBECK.

1893,	4	97	44	32	17	12	3	12	33
1894,	6	97	33	36	9	11	5	7	27
1895,	6	98	31	31	8	11	4	10	52

The Landgestüte or Rural Studs.

The rural studs distribute their stallions by twos and threes to stations in different parts of their districts, according to the demand for their services.

The statistics for 1895 show that 17 rural studs had 2,551 stallions in use, divided among 899 stations.

The following is an abstract of the table of foaling results of the rural studs for 1894–5, published in the Agricultural Year-books:—

Number of Stallions employed in 1894,	2,516
Number of Mares covered by them,	134,908
Of which	41,348 remained barren.
	93,560, or 60 per cent., became pregnant.
Living Foals born in 1895,	78,766
Of which	9,672 were branded with the Stud mark.

Each stallion produced on an average 32 living foals.

At the end of 1895, the total number of stallions employed by the rural studs amounted to 2,587, divided into three classes, with sub-divisions of the 3rd class:—

—	Number of Stallions.
Class I.—Light Riding Horses,	419
Class II.—Heavy Riding or Light Draught Horses,	1,153
Class III.—Heavy Draught Horses,	681
Percherons,	2
Belgian and Ardennes Horses,	86
Clydesdales,	16
Shire Horses,	55
Do., Belgian cross,	1
French Farm Horses,	7
Normandy do.,	6
German Farm Horse Type,	161
	2,587

In the first class were included 100 thoroughbred stallions, of which 94 were pure English, 2 Anglo-Arabian, and 4 pure Arabian blood.

Of the above stallions 1,989 had been purchased, the remainder — 598 — bred in the Government Studs.

The following Table shows the progress made in the work of the rural studs within the last twelve years:—

	Period.			Period.		
	1884.	1885.	1886.	1893.	1894.	1895.
Total number of Stallions,	2,152	2,236	2,296	2,463	2,502	2,587
Number of Stations,	775	792	800	874	890	899
Total Number of Mares Covered,	111,451	120,143	116,839	136,076	134,834	145,133
	348,433			416,043		

Military Remounts.

The principal object of the Government Stud Department is to provide remounts for the Army. With this object in view, the Provinces of East and West Prussia, Posen, Hanover, and Brandenburg, which offer the most favourable conditions for the purpose, have been selected as the so-called "Remount Provinces," and the stallions stationed in them are exclusively strong thoroughbred. The effect of this has been to increase the speed and endurance of the breed. In these Provinces all forms of State aid for the encouragement of horse-breeding, prizes at horse shows, &c., are given only for the type of horse required for military purposes.

The annual number of horses purchased by the Prussian Remount Commission increased from 7,182 in 1885 to 8,374 in 1890, and 8,758 in 1895. The Bavarian and Saxon cavalry is also almost exclusively remounted from East Prussia.

Of the remounts in 1895, about 6,000 were intended for the cavalry, and of these 588 were from thoroughbred sires. Under existing arrangements this proportion will increase, and is expected shortly to reach 10 per cent.

Estimates of Government Stud Department.

The separate Estimates of the Government Stud Department for 1896–97 show a total revenue of £123,699, and a total expenditure of £262,999, of which only £16,070 are under the heading of "non-current and extraordinary expenditure."

The revenue is divided as follows:—

	£
On the four principal stud farms—	
Horses and Cattle sold,	15,437
Covering Fees and Foal Money,	1,870
Farming Receipts,	14,496
Value of the Emoluments of Officials, &c.,	2,350
Other sources of Revenue, including Racing Prizes won by the Graditz Stud,	2,140
Total of Principal Studs,	36,293
On the rural stud farms (Landgestüte)—	£
Covering Fees and Foal Money,	82,704
Farming Receipts,	624
Value of Emoluments to Officials, &c.,	492
Other sources of Revenue,	1,326
Total of Rural Studs,	85,156
Total of Receipts from Stud Farms,	121,449
In the Central Administration—	£
Sale of Superannuated Stallions and other items,	2,250
Total Revenue,	123,699

The expenditure may shortly be divided as follows :—

	£
Salaries and Allowances of Officials,	12,970
Wages and Outfits at the principal Stud Farms,	12,269
Do. at the rural Stud Farms,	33,618
Material Expenditure at the principal Stud Farms (including Transport, Office Expenses, Forage, Farming Expenses, Maintenance of Buildings, Rents, Rates, and Taxes, &c.),	47,869
The same for the rural Studs,	79,958
	£186,684
Expenses of the Central Administration and various Expenditure (including an item of £50,000 for the purchase of horses and for large transports),	60,242
Total of Permanent Expenditure,	£246,926
Extraordinary Expenditure (for Drainage and Purchase of Land, &c., with a Special Supplement to the Fund for purchase of Horses),	16,073
Total Expenditure,	£262,999

A note to the item of £50,000 (to which should be added £3,750 in the extraordinary expenditure), for the purchase of horses, &c., explains that from this fund horse-breeding associations can obtain advances bearing no interest, which must be repiad within six years. Such repayments, except they are partly or wholly remitted for special reasons, are added to the fund, and any surplus can be carried forward from one year to the next.

NOTE.—At the end of 1895, there were 61 horse-breeding associations in Prussia, which had taken advantage of such loans, the total sum lent by the Government amounting to £5,275.

The annual amount of the loans granted was as follows :—

1890–91,	£1,339
1891–92,	900
1892–93,	1,490
1893–94,	2,770
1894–95,	1,080
1895–96,	2,440

The deficit to be made good from public funds is, therefore, for the principal and rural stud farms :—

Expenditure,	£186,684
Less,	121,449
	£65,235

Or the vote required for the whole Government Stud Department, including the Central Administration and the extraordinary Estimates :—

Expenditure,	£262,999
Less,	123,699
	£139,300

The Estimates of the Government Stud Department for 1897–98 show an increase on these figures both in receipts and expenditure. Briefly stated they are :—

Total Receipts,	£129,372
Total ordinary Expenditure of Government Studs,	199,311
Central Administration,	60,242
Extraordinary Expenditure,	38,922
Total Expenditure,	£298,475
Less Receipts,	129,373
To be supplied from Public Funds,	£169,103

Total Expenditure for Encouragement of Horse-breeding.

Taking both heads of expenditure together, the total amount voted by the Prussian Parliament for the encouragement of horse-breeding was :—

—	1896-97.	1897-98.
	£	£
In Estimates of Ministry of Agriculture,	23,171	23,171
Government Stud Department,	139,300	169,103
Total Expenditure,	162,471	192,274

Financial position of Government studs.

With two exceptions all the stud farms work at a loss—that at Trakehnen being estimated at £10,638 for 1896-97. The exceptions are the two Lithunian rural studs at Insterburg and Gudwallen, the former credited with a profit of £824 and £554, the latter with one of £2,976 and £2,349, in the Estimates of 1896-97 and 1897-98, respectively.

Licensing ordinances for stallions.

In all the provinces of Prussia so-called "Körordnungen" are now in force—*i.e.*, Ordinances for the establishment of licensing committees for stallions, bulls, and boars. These committees are appointed locally, but some influence is exerted from the Ministry of Agriculture on their composition and management.

During the year 1895–96 the number of stallions presented amounted to 2,306, of which 1,488 were licensed. Of the latter 812 were light riding or draught horses (so-called warm-blooded race), 563 farm and cart horses, 113 a cross between the two.

The object of these ordinances is to prevent poor stallions being preferred to good ones either from want of knowledge or from motives of misguided economy in covering fees. They all take the form of simple Police Ordinances, in order that they may be more easily altered to suit the varying requirements of horse and cattle breeding in the different districts.

The annexed Police Ordinance for the Province of Brandenburg is one of the latest issued, and is given as an example.

Police Ordinance respecting the Licensing of Private Stallions in the Province of Brandenburg.

On the basis of the powers conferred by § 137 of the Law respecting the General Administration of the Kingdom of the 30th of July, 1883, and by §§ 6, 12 and 15 of the Law respecting the Police Administration of the 11th of March, 1850, and repealing all previous regulations relative to keeping private stallions, it is decreed for the extent of the Province of Brandenburg, with the consent of the Provincial Council, as follows:—

§ 1.—Private stallions may only be employed to cover mares belonging to other persons, if the competent Licensing Board (Schauamt) has certified their fitness by the issue of a licence (Berechtigungs Schein).

§ 2. Each Administrative District (Kreis) shall form a licensing district (Körbezirk), the towns of Potsdam and Spandau being included in the district of East Havelland, Brandenberg in that of West Havelland, Charlottenburg in the district of Teltow, Frankford a Oder in the district of Lebus, and the towns of Guben and Kottbus in the districts of the same name. If in future a town is separate from the administrative district in which it is situated, the boundaries of the licensing district shall not thereby be altered.

For each licensing district a licensing board (Schauamt) shall be established, and one or more licensing stations (Schauorte) shall be appointed and publicly made known.

§ 3. The licensing board shall consist of:—

1. The Royal District Commissioner (Landrath) or a deputy elected for six years by the District Assembly (Kreistag) as Chairman;

2. The Director of the Royal Rural Stud concerned;

3. A member to be elected by the Principal Board of Management of the Provincial Agricultural Association for the Mark Brandenburg and Nieder Lausitz, who may belong to several licensing boards;

4. A member to be elected for six years by the District Assembly.

5. A Veterinary Surgeon to be selected, if possible, from among the veterinary officials of the district, and appointed by the President of the Government (Head of an administrative division or "Bezirk") concerned.

This Veterinary Surgeon shall have a consultative voice only.

For each member of the Board one or more deputies shall be elected or appointed in the same manner.

§ 4. The licensing board shall meet in the months of October, November, and December of each year. The place, day and hour of each meeting shall be notified by the District Commissioner, after consulting the members named in § 3, under 2 and 3, at least 14 days before the date in the District Gazette, or, as regards towns, in any papers which may be used for the publication of official notices.

§ 5. The owner of a stallion who wishes to use it for covering mares belonging to other persons, must notify the fact to the District Commissioner (Landrath) concerned before the end of September of each year, presenting at the same time a schedule according to the annexed model A, duly filled in, and stating the place where the stallion is permanently stabled.

§ 6. Only such stallions may be licensed as have completed their third year, and are without hereditary faults.

§ 7. The licensing board, the decisions of which are only valid when all the members (§ 3) are present, decides by majority of votes.

In case an equal number of votes are given for and against granting a licence, it shall be refused.

If a member of the licensing board is unable to attend the meetings at the appointed time, he must notify the fact, as soon as he can foresee such inability, to his deputy and to the Landrath. Such notification shall be considered as a summons to the deputy to appear at the meeting.

The decisions of the licensing board are final and are recorded. Every voting member of the Board may obtain a copy of the records from the Landrath on application.

Stallions which have been licensed in one year may be presented again in the following year.

§ 8. If a stallion is found fit for service by the licensing board, the owner shall receive a licence (Berechtigungs Schein), signed by the Chairman of the Board in the form of the annexed model B. The amount of covering fee which is noted on the licence, is fixed by the owner, but cannot be either raised or lowered during the covering season, for which the licence is issued.

The Royal District Commissioner (Landrath) shall publish the descriptions of the licensed stallions, together with the place where they stand and the amount of the covering fees.

§ 9. The licence (§§ 1 and 8) is valid for the covering season following the date of its issue; and each licensed stallion must again be presented and examined at each succeeding annual meeting of the Board, if it is again to be used for covering mares belonging to other persons.

§ 10. If the owner of a stallion wishes the licensing board to meet before the dates fixed in § 4, he must communicate with the Landrath and refund any expenses which may arise.

§ 11. Each licensed stallion must remain, during the covering season, at the place indicated by the owner at the meeting of the board. If the stallion is meanwhile sold, and the place where it stands consequently altered, the fact must be notified to the Landrath, or, if it is thereby transferred to another district (Kreis) of the province of Brandenburg, to both the District Commissioners concerned. If a licensed stallion belongs to several owners it may be taken to their various places of residence for the purpose of covering their own mares.

A non-licensed stallion which is the common property of several owners can only be used by one of the same, whose name must be notified in writing to the chairman of the licensing board, for covering his own mares.

§ 12. Every owner of licensed stallions must keep a covering register according to the annexed model C, in which the mares covered by each stallion are to be entered. This register shall be closed at the end of the covering season—at latest on the 31st of July—in each year, and must be forwarded to the Landrath with the expired licence.

§ 13. The following fees are collected for stallions presented to the licensing board to meet the expenses of the same:—

1. For each stallion licensed:—
   (*a.*) The first time, 10 Marks;
   (*b.*) On each further occasion, 5 Marks.
2. For each stallion not licensed, 3 Marks.

§ 14. Infractions of §§ 1, 9, 11, and 12 of this Police Ordinance are punishable by fines up to 60 Marks (£3). The same penalty applies to the owners of mares who allow them to be covered by non-licensed stallions belonging to other persons.

§ 15. This ordinance comes into force on the 1st of October, 1891. The requisite elections for the licensing boards and other preparations (§ 2, 3, 4, and 5) are to be carried out in good time.

Potsdam,
April 14, 1891.

The Ober Präsident.
(Signed), Von Achenbach.

MODEL A.

DESCRIPTION OF STALLION TO BE USED AS SIRE.

Name and Residence of Owner—

No.	Name of Stallion.	Pedigree.	Size.		Colour and Marks.	Age. Years.	Covering Fee. Marks.	Observations of the Licensing Board.
			M.	Cm.				

MODEL B.

LICENCE.

The Stallion (name) years old, out of .dam
by sire, metres centimetres high,
colour, with marks, is licensed to cover mares belonging to persons other
than its owner during the year The covering fee amounts to
marks.

Date

The Licensing Board of the District of

Signature of the Chairman.

MODEL C.

REGISTER OF THE PRIVATE COVERING STATION BELONGING TO

No.	Name and Residence of Owner of Mare.	Mares.				Covered by (Name of Stallion).	Date.	Observations.
		Size.		Colour and Marks.	Age. Years.			
		M.	Cm.					

APPENDIX B.

RESOLUTION passed by the COUNTY KERRY GRAND JURY at the Spring Assizes, 1897.

Proposed by Arthur Blennerhassett; seconded by St. J. H. Donovan.

Resolved—"That we hope that the Congested Districts Board will not this year, or for the future, send any Hackney sires to County Kerry, as we do not consider them suitable. The largest dealers and most experienced horse breeders both in England and Ireland condemn them in every way.

"And that in place of the Hackneys, thoroughbred or Arab sires be sent."

(Signed), E. A. DE MOLEYNS, Foreman.

PETITION PRESENTED to the COMMISSION by a DEPUTATION at DINGLE ON 26th May, 1897.

Resolved—1st: "That we, the Ratepayers of the Dingle Union, desire to impress upon the Commission on Horse-breeding through our Representative, Sir Thomas H. Grattan Esmonde, Bart, M.P., the absolute necessity of providing a more suitable and better class of Stallion for this District which is purely agricultural."

2nd: "From our experience of Hackney breeding of horses in this part of the country, the most suitable class of stallion would be a strong thoroughbred and a Shire horse if possible."

3rd: "That we consider the progeny of the Hackney stallion unfit to realize a profitable price."

David Watson (Chairman).
John Adams.
Richard Talbot.
Patrick M'Donnell.
Maurice Moriarty.
Michael M'Donnell.
John Casey.
Michael F. Moriarty.
Timothy O'Flaherty (Secretary).

RESOLUTION of AGRICULTURAL and other SOCIETIES.

Clonmel, Co. Tipperary.
6th August, 1896.

We, the Members of the Committee of the Clonmel Horse Show Society, protest in the strongest manner against the introduction of the breed of Hackney horses into Ireland by the aid of State funds as being

detrimental to the best interests of farmers and the good of the country at large, tending to deteriorate that breed of horses for which Ireland has hitherto been just celebrated.

Passed unanimously.

(Signed), STEPHEN MOORE,
Chairman of the Committee.

Mullingar, 11th August, 1896.

We, the Members of the "Mullingar Horse Show Committee," desire to enter our earnest protest against the allocation of State Funds to Hackney Stallions in Ireland, the introduction of which breed we consider calculated to injure the Horse-breeding industry of Ireland.

Passed unanimously.

(Signed), GREVILLE,
Chairman and President.

Navan, 17th August, 1896.

We, the Members of the Committee of the Navan Horse Show, protest in the strongest manner against the introduction of the breed of Hackney horses into Ireland, by the aid of State Funds, as being detrimental to the best interests of farmers and the good of the country at large, tending to deteriorate that breed of horses for which Ireland has hitherto been justly celebrated.

Passed unanimously.

Signed on behalf of "Meath Horse Show Committee."

R. H. FOWLER,
J. N. G. POLLOCK,
Hon. Secs., Meath Horse Show.

RESOLUTION passed at a MEETING of the COUNTY CORK AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Cork, 14th September, 1896.

R. H. HAYES, President, in the Chair.

We, the Members of the Committee of the "Cork Agricultural Society," protest in the strongest manner against the introduction of the breed of Hackney horses into Ireland, by the aid of State funds, as being detrimental to the best interests of farmers and the good of the country at large, tending to deteriorate that breed of horses for which Ireland has hitherto been justly celebrated.

Passed unanimously.

Signed on behalf Co. Cork Agricultural Society,
GEO. REYNOLDS, Secretary.

LIMERICK HORSE SHOW and AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Limerick, 3rd October, 1896.

Resolved,—That we, the Members of the Committee of the Limerick Horse Show and Agricultural Society, protest most strongly against the State-aided introduction of Hackney stallions into any portion of this country, as we believe the blood will seriously deteriorate the class of horses now bred in this country, and in this opinion we are supported by the best judges in England, where the experiment has been tried and proved a failure, and we suggest the substitute of thoroughbred horses with bone and substance, or of sires as nearly thoroughbred as possible, which have proved good colt getters.

Passed unanimously.

(Signed), JOS. P. GAFFNEY,
High Sheriff, Chairman.

"BALLINASLOE DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY."

Ballinasloe, 12th October, 1896.

Resolved,—That we, the Members of the Committee of the Ballinasloe Horse and Agricultural Society, wish to place upon record our objection to the introduction of Hackney blood in any form into Ireland.

We believe that it will be most injurious in results to the maintenance of the character of high class horses which have been produced in this country, whether as hunters, carriage horses, army remounts, or polo ponies.

(Signed), R. J. GILL, Secretary.

APPENDIX C.

LETTER FROM COLONEL ST. QUINTIN.

Island Bridge Barracks, Dublin,
June 6th, 1897

MY LORD,—With reference to the remarks that have come before the Commission on Horse-breeding in Ireland, as to the dealings of Government in this country for remounting, I will, at your request, endeavour, without going too deeply into details, to put as concisely as I can before you the actual position of the Remount Department, and my reasons for saying that under existing circumstances it appears to me to be impossible that more can be done than is being done to bring Government into closer relations with the breeders. I feel that there are two or three erroneous ideas abroad in connexion with the horse supply and the requirements of Government. The most general one is that the English Army experiences difficulty in completing its annual remounts. This is far from the case. I could obtain practically any reasonable number required. In the last quarter we had a sudden and unusal demand for horses for augmentation and usual casualties, and between the middle of February and the end of March I put 738 horses into the Service with their different regiments. This could not have been done by personal purchase from the breeders, or without the assistance of well-known reliable dealers. I am in the somewhat unique position of regarding the foreign buyers as my best business friends, seeing as I do daily how their demand improves and guarantees our supply, and I go farther and regard free trade in the horses of this country as its material safeguard in the future against the inevitable developments of electricity, motor cars, &c., and for any large supply in case of emergency. For assured supply of any business demand the middleman is, under the existing state of our commerce, a necessity, as he is in touch with, and rather more than less controls, the output. With reference to our Army demand, it is not, if we wished to, of sufficient size to depose him from this position, and with the large continental and private demand in the horse market, we should, if we cut adrift from him, be relegated to the offscourings or rejected by him the larger buyer. It should be noted that foreign military buyers, and the majority of civilian ones also, place themselves in the hands of the dealers, and few attempt, on any large scale, or to any great extent, personal purchase, a system which undoubtedly re-

ceives the support of the vendor. Government is most anxious to develop this contact and business of personal purchase, as far as it is compatible with the interests of the public service, and there are many gentlemen in this country who have it much at heart and to whom my most sincere thanks are due for their exertions in the matter; they have, at different times at great trouble to themselves, got together collections of the farmers' horses in their various neighbourhoods for me; they have got up Remount Classes at local shows, and helped in every way they could. I regret to say almost invariably with the same result, disappointment. I buy in the fairs and from private breeders some 150 horses annually, to stock the Government farm in Lusk, beyond that number there is no accommodation. These horses are used for replacing casualties and small orders; but to keep up a continuity of supply for sudden or large demands it is necessary to be in touch with the trade, who are continually buying and storing horses, as farmers do their cattle, and who have to take all risks whilst in their hands with chance of purchase, and after purchase the responsibility until the horses are landed with their regiments, and with certain guarantees for the future. This the breeder could not and would not do, he would neither keep the horses, till such time as they were required, on the chance of their being taken by Government, nor accept the other risks. Far be it from me to hurt the feelings of the people of this country, where I may say my friends are innumerable, but my greatest difficulty in trading personally is the extremely low estimate formed by many as to what is necessary for a soldier's horse, and the price expected when once the vendor is in direct contact with Government. I mean that in most cases horses brought up have been the round of several fairs, and not till it has been found that they are unsaleable, or will only command a much lower price than the vendor has expected for them, is the Remount market thought of, and then surprise is expressed that the selection is so careful, and that we require something better than an animal unsuitable for other demands. The breeder also seems to be under the impression that he ought to receive £40 for every animal he may sell to Government, and does not seem to realize that horses have different values, and that the horse, with all its expenses, is expected to be landed in the ranks of the service at an average price of £40. You may rightly say the breeders should do the best they can for themselves: granted, but it devolves on me, or rather on my Department, to do the best we can for the troops we remount, for the State, and consequently indirectly for the country as tax-payers.

As to the question of the price of horses it is a difficult one, but one that is so well understood between the breeder and the trade that it practically accommodates itself to circumstances, which must in a trade of the sort fluctuate greatly, but the knowledge of both the breeder and the dealer in this country is so close, and the margin so small, that both can tell almost to a nicety the actual trade value of the animal, and deal accordingly, and a good colt will always fetch his value in the open market.

The breeder really looks on the dealer as his best friend, and will sell to him at a lower price than to the Remount Agent, as he is well aware that the dealer will buy his high priced as well as low priced stock, and will if satisfied return the following year; whereas the Remount Agent can only touch the Remount Class, and a different man with different ideas may appear or not the following year, and some breeders would not think of selling to me until that particular dealer had had "first show."

On the question of the present system of purchase of four-year-olds instead of three-year-olds I need not enter, except to tell you that up to the present I have been able to obtain them to my satisfaction. You will have many suggestions made to you, as to Government breeding studs, reserve depôts for young stock, &c., &c., from men ready to give an opinion, but who I can hardly think have studied the details and consequences. Though I do not say something might not be done on different lines to the present as far as Government is concerned, it resolves itself into a question of £ *s.* *d.*, which is most carefully controlled, and the power in the hands of those who may take a different view of the situation, as Government can undoubtedly remount itself efficiently on its present lines.

With regard to the foreign trade, I have it on the best authority that Irish horse-breeding is the wonder and envy of continental nations, who support, I may say, maintain their breeding by State aid. True, they have not, or only in limited areas, our limestone subsoil, to which I attribute the indisputable excellence of our indigenous breed, nor have they invariably stuck to the highest strain for producing high class riding horses, but have intermingled their breeding with not always the best results, and they consequently attach a high value to our horses of that class.

As to the riding horses for Government Service, I cannot believe they can be produced to any pitch of excellence except by breeding upwards and not downwards, *i.e.*, from the highest possible strain of blood, and to the true riding type; it is an undoubted fact that blood carries more weight comparatively under a strain than bone, and to blood alone I feel assured is due their speed and stamina, and that it makes them what they are, the best in the world.

I hope I have now made the position plain to you, and should you consider these few remarks will help to clear up some of the erroneous ideas now held in this country with regard to the action of the Remount Department, I trust you will give expression to them.

I may say in conclusion that as what I now write may be, much to my regret, almost a farewell to this country and its horse enterprise, in which I take great interest, I would most earnestly commend you to improve and preserve to your uttermost, the good mares for breeding, and to keep up the high standard and excellence of the horses you now possess. I trust the deliberations, and outcome of this present Commission, of which I have the honour to be a member, may tend to that result.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your obedient servant,

T. A. St. Quintin,

Colonel,

A. I. of R. Ireland.

To the Earl of Dunraven, K.P.,
&c., &c., &c.

APPENDIX D.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD FOR IRELAND.

STATEMENT showing the EXPENDITURE in connection with the SCHEME for IMPROVEMENT of HORSES and ASSES up to 31st March, 1896.

EXPENDITURE TO 31ST MARCH, 1896.	Amount.	Total.
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE:—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
To Purchase of 42 Stallions,	8,015 1 9	
Do. 8 Mares,	1,295 0 0	
Do. 26 Asses (including 3 Ass Foals),	930 7 2	
Do. 1 Mule,	22 0 0	
Do. 1 Stallion Pony (purchased in Arran),	21 0 0	
Do. 1 Farm Horse for Stud Farm,	24 10 0	
Do. 10 Foals (Half-breeds),	73 10 0	
Hire of Stallions,	190 3 9	
Clothing and Equipment of Stallions,	369 19 5	
Cost of Stud Farm Buildings,	4,526 0 0	
" " " Furniture,	85 18 8	
" " " Implements, etc.,	176 9 0	
" " " Water Supply,	153 2 1	
" " " Fencing,	79 14 9	
Cost of Fitting up Stables in Country,	675 13 10	
Total Capital Expenditure,		16,638 10 5

	Year 1892-93.	Year 1893-94.	Year 1894-95.	Year 1895-96.		
ANNUAL MAINTENANCE:—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
Transport Expenses (to and from Country Stations),	211 7 4	239 5 11	235 6 11	290 11 5	976 11 7	
Keep in Country and Forage while at Central Stud Farm,	865 15 10	1,373 3 0	1,192 18 0	1,382 10 11	4,814 7 9	
Shoeing, Veterinary Fees, &c.,	48 17 8	281 3 3	172 4 0	147 10 2	649 15 1	
Manager and Grooms,	841 10 9	1,174 14 11	1,183 14 9	1,360 3 8	4,560 4 1	
Remuneration to R.I.C.,	246 0 0	385 6 0	335 15 0	365 15 0	1,332 16 0	
Stud Farm.—Repairs, Painting,	—	—	—	72 2 4	72 2 4	
" Rent and Taxes,	—	286 14 8	194 5 0	203 16 0	684 15 8	
" Labour on Farm,	13 0 0	111 18 4	88 7 6	53 10 0	256 15 10	
Coal, Oils, &c.,	4 16 0	14 18 10	17 0 0	26 16 9	63 11 7	
Inspection of Mares, Advertising for Tenders, Insurance of Horses, &c., &c.,	324 11 1	362 12 8	216 6 3	282 13 7	1,186 3 7	
						14,597 3 6
Total Maintenance Expenditure,	2,545 18 8	4,229 17 7	3,635 17 5	4,185 9 10	14,597 3 6	
GROSS TOTAL EXPENDITURE,						31,235 13 11

WM. L. MICKS.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD FOR IRELAND.

SCHEDULE SHOWING NUMBER, BREED, NAMES, PEDIGREES, AND DISTRIBUTION OF STALLION

No.	Breed.	Name.	Pedigree.	Distribution.					Date of Purchase.	Observations.
				1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.		
1	Hackney,	"Rokeby,"	Book B, p. 34,	Ballinamore,	Ballinamore,	Oughterard,	Carndonagh,	—	20.2.92,	Sold, February, 1896.
2	Do.,	"North Riding,"	„ A, p. 25,	Schull,	Donegal,	Ballinamore,	—	—	20.2.92,	Sold, December, 1894.
3	Do.,	"Real Gentleman,"	„ B, p. 33,	Dunfanaghy,	Dunfanaghy,	Achill Sound,	Louisburgh,	—	20.2.92,	Died, 5th May, 1895.
4	Do.,	"Callis Fireaway,"	„ A, p. 17,	Achill Sound,	Achill Sound,	Belmullet,	—	—	20.2.92,	Died, July, 1894.
5	Do.,	"Beau,"	„ B, p. 7,	Newport (Mayo),	Newport (Mayo),	Dungloe,	Dungloe,	Dungloe,	20.2.92.	
6	Do.,	"Fashion III.,	„ B, p. 16,	Clonbur,	Kenmare,	Kenmare,	Dingle,	Dingle,	20.2.92.	
7	Do.,	"Lord Go Bang,"	„ B, p. 24,	Letterfrack,	Carrigart,	Carrigart,	Caherciveen,	Caherciveen,	20.2.92.	
8	Do.,	"Zeus,"	„ A, p. 14,	Dungloe,	Dungloe,	Cashel,	—	—	20.2.92,	Sold, August, 1894.
9	Do.,	"Lord Derwent,"	„ B, p. 22,	Belmullet,	Achill Sound,	—	—	—	30.4.92,	Died, December, 1894.
10	Do.,	"Fireaway II.,"	„ B, p. 37,	Swinford,	Swinford,	Swinford,	Kenmare,	—	30.4.92,	Died, 15th Sept., 1895.
11	Do.,	"King Fireaway,"	„ A, p. 18,	Oughterard,	Caherciveen,	Caherciveen,	—	—	30.4.92,	Sold, August, 1894.
12	Do.,	"Lord Tennyson,"	„ B, p. 29,	Carndonagh,	Ardara,	Ardara,	Ardara,	Letterfrack,	30.4.92.	
13	Do.,	"Highgate Performer,"	„ B, p. 19,	—	Dingle,	Dingle,	Carrigart,	—	18.2.93,	Sold, February, 1896.
14	Do.,	"Romulus II.,	„ B, p. 35,	—	Schull,	Schull,	Achill Sound,	Castletown Bere,	18.2.93.	
15	Do.,	"Gay Lad III.,"	„ B, p. 18,	—	Bantry,	Bantry,	Swinford,	Swinford,	9.2.93.	
16	Do.,	"Earl of Nithsdale,"	„ A, p. 13,	—	Carndonagh,	Carndonagh,	—	—	9.2.93,	Died, 22nd October, 1894.
17	Do.,	"Flying Fireaway,"	„ B, p. 17,	—	—	Dunfanaghy,	Dunfanaghy,	Dunfanaghy,	18.2.93.	
18	Do.,	"Ireland's Duke of York,"	„ B, p. 20,	—	—	—	Belmullet,	Belmullet,	2.5.93.	
19	Do.,	"Chantilly the 1st,"	„ B, p. 12,	—	—	—	Letterfrack,	Cashel,	—	Foaled, 22nd May, 1893.
20	Do.,	"Matchless Fireaway,"	H. S. B. 3138, Vol. viii.,	—	—	Donegal,	—	—	16.2.94,	Died, 12th Feb., 1895.
21	Do.,	"Bursea Performer,"	Book B, p. 8,	—	—	—	Grange,	Louisburgh,	14.2.94.	
22	Do.,	"Bay Malton,"	„ B, p. 5,	—	—	—	Stranorlar,	Stranorlar,	15.2.94.	
23	Do.,	"Lord Leppington,	„ B, p. 25,	—	—	Newport,	Donegal,	Carndonagh,	16.2.94.	
24	Do.,	"Proud Dane,"	„ B, p. 32,	—	—	—	Cashel and Letterfrack,	—	28.3.94.	Cut, 1895.
25	Do.,	"Lord Saxon,"	„ B, p. 27,	—	—	—	Newport,	Clifden,	27.8.94.	

SCHEDULE SHOWING NUMBER, BREED, NAMES, PEDIGREES, AND DISTRIBUTION OF STALLIONS—*continued.*

No.	Breed.	Name.	Pedigree.	Distribution.					Date of Purchase.	Observations.
				1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896.		
26	Hackney,	"Lord Sheridan,"	Book B, p. 28,	—	—	—	Letterfrack,	Newport,	24.8.94,	Died, 31st May, 1896.
27	Do.,	"Merry Lad,"	„ B, p. 30,	—	—	—	—	Newport,	—	Foaled, 1894.
28	Do.,	"Lord Domville,"	„ B, p. 23,	—	—	—	—	—	—	Foaled, 1894.
29	Do.,	"Carnaroon,"	„ B, p. 10,	—	—	—	Ballinamore,	Ballinamore,	26.1.95.	
30	Do.,	"Derwent,"	„ B, p. 13,	—	—	—	Schull,	Achill Sound,	25.1.95.	
31	Do.,	"Enthorpe Duke,"	„ B, p. 15,	—	—	—	Bantry,	Kenmare,	29.1.95.	
32	Do.,	"Grimston Performer,"	H. S. B. 3,646, Vol. ix.,	—	—	—	Louisburgh,	—	—	Hired for season, 1895.
33	Do.,	"Floodsferry Cadet,"	H. S. B. 4,771, Vol. xi.,	—	—	—	Cashel,	—	—	Hired for season, 1895.
34	Do.,	"Lord Middleton,"	Book B, p. 26,	—	—	—	Carndonagh,	Carrigart,	26.1.95,	Died, 11th July, 1896.
35	Do.,	"Sir Tatton,"	„ B, p. 38,	—	—	—	Churchhill,	Ballydehob,	25.1.95.	
36	Do.,	"Convoy,"	H. S. B. 4,712, Vol. xi.,	—	—	—	—	Ardara,	1.4.96.	
37	Cleveland Bay,	"Bay Benedict,"	Book A, p. 32,	Kilmorna,	Kilmorna,	—	—	—	3.4.92,	Sold, March, 1894.
38	Barb,	"Awfully Jolly,"	„ B, p. 39,	Cashel (Galway),	Cashel (Galway),	Carraroe,	Achill Sound,	Achill Sound,	30.4.92.	
39	Arab,	"Ali Baba,"	Imported,	Belmullet,	—	—	—	—	—	Hired for season, 1892.
40	Do.,	"Desert Born,"	„	Achill Sound,	—	Achill Sound,	Belmullet,	Belmullet,	20.11.93.	Do. (subsequently purchased.
41	Do.,	"Tirassan,"	Book A, p. 27,	Glenties,	Belmullet,	Fintown,	—	—	Presented by H. M. the Queen 4.92.	Returned to Windsor, 15.8.94.
42	Welsh Cob,	"Electricity,"	„ B, p. 40,	—	Louisburgh,	Louisburgh,	Carraroe,	Carraroe,	18.2.93.	
43	Do.,	"Sunbeam,"	„ B, p. 44,	—	Letterfrack,	Letterfrack,	Oughterard,	Oughterard,	7.3.93.	
44	Do.,	"Express IV.,"	„ B, p. 41,	—	Ballyconneely,	Ballyconneely,	Keel, Achill Island,	Keel, Achill Island,	18.2.93.	
45	Do.,	"Prince Llewellyn,'	„ B, p. 43,	—	Oughterard,	Aran Island,	Aran Island,	Carndonagh,	6.4.93.	
46	Welsh Pony,	"Welsh Tommy,"	„ B, p. 45,	—	Achill Sound,	Swinford,	Kiltimagh,	Kiltimagh,	30.6.92.	
47	Do.,	"Movement,"	„ B, p. 42,	—	Carraroe,	Inishboffin,	Clare Island,	Clare Island,	18.2.93.	
48	Thoroughbred,	"St. Aidan,"	Card attached,	—	—	—	—	Chantilly,	16.12.92	
49	Do.,	"Uncle Sam,"	Do.,	—	—	—	—	Bantry,	15.3.96.	
50	Welsh Pony,	"Brecon Prince,"	Book A, p.	—	—	—	—	—	2.93.	Sold January, 1894.

WM. L. MICKS.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD FOR IRELAND.

SCHEDULE

SHOWING the NUMBER of MARES SERVED by each of the BOARD'S STALLIONS since 1892 inclusive.

No.	Name of Stallion.	Breed of Stallion.	No. of Seasons Used.	Mares Served.	
				Total No.	Average No. in each Season.
1	"Rokeby,"	Hackney,	4	172	43
2	"North Riding,"	"	3	183	61
3	"Real Gentleman,"	"	4	198	49
4	"Callis Fireaway,"	"	3	263	87
5	"Bean,"	"	5	214	43
6	"Fashion III.,"	"	5	360	72
7	"Lord Go Bang,"	"	5	322	64
8	"Zeus,"	"	3	185	62
9	"Lord Derwent,"	"	3	182	61
10	"Fireaway II.,"	"	4	357	89
11	"King Fireaway,"	"	3	197	66
12	"Lord Tennyson,"	"	5	337	67
13	"Highgate Performer,"	"	3	137	46
14	"Romulus II.,"	"	4	191	48
15	"Gay Lad III.,"	"	4	255	64
16	"Earl of Nithsdale,"	"	2	152	76
17	"Flying Fireaway,"	"	3	188	63
18	"Ireland's Duke of York,"	"	2	108	54
19	"Chantilly I.,"	"	2	64	32
20	"Matchless Fireaway,"	"	1	62	62
21	"Bursea Performer,"	"	2	81	40
22	"Bay Malton,"	"	2	118	59
23	"Lord Leppington,"	"	3	126	42
24	"Proud Dane,"	"	1	15	15
25	"Lord Saxon,"	"	2	101	50
26	"Lord Sheridan,"	"	2	46	23
	"Merry Lad,"	"	1	8	8

SCHEDULE showing the NUMBER of MARES served by each of the BOARD'S STALLIONS since 1982 inclusive—*continued.*

No.	Name of Stallion.	Breed of Stallion.	No. of Seasons Used.	Mares Served.	
				Total No.	Average No. in each Season.
28	"Lord Domville,"	Hackney,	–	–	–
29	"Carnaroon,"	„	2	102	51
30	"Derwent,"	„	2	83	41
31	"Enthorpe Duke,"	„	2	109	54
32	"Grimston Performer,"	„	1	71	71
33	"Floodferry Cadet,"	„	1	39	39
34	"Lord Middleton,"	„	2	90	45
35	"Sir Tatton,"	„	2	82	41
36	"Convoy,"	„	1	77	77
37	"Bay Benedict,"	Cleveland Bay,	2	86	43
38	"Awfully Jolly,"	Barb,	5	224	45
39	"Ali Baba,"	Arab,	1	19	19
40	"Desert Born,"	„	4	140	35
41	"Tirassan,"	„	3	112	37
42	"Electricity,"	Welsh Cob,	4	276	69
43	"Sunbeam,"	„	4	200	50
44	"Express IV.,"	„	4	115	29
45	"Prince Llewellyn,"	„	4	150	37
46	"Welsh Tommy,"	Welsh Pony,	4	220	55
47	"Movement,"	„	4	134	33
48	"St. Aidan,"	Thoroughbred,	1	13	13
49	"Uncle Sam,"	„	1	42	42

WM. L. MICKS.

APPENDIX E.

EXTRACT from American paper, *Spirit of the Times*, handed in by Mr. JAMES DALY.

"In 1893, 13,707 American horses were exported to Great Britain, and in 1894 the figures rose to 22,866. In 1895 they swelled to 34,092, while for nine months of this year they total up to 34,642, so that it is safe to say that when the year's statistics are footed up close upon 40,000 will have been exported."

APPENDIX F.—RETURN OF STALLIONS IN THE HANDS OF PRIVATE OWNERS STANDING IN IRELAND IN 1896.

(Compiled by the Land Commission from Reports furnished by the Constabulary.)

PROVINCE AND COUNTY.	Under £1.	£1 and upwards, but not including £2.	£2 and upwards, but not including £3.	£3 and upwards, but not including £4.	£4 and upwards, but not including £5.	£5 and upwards but not including £6.	£6 and upwards, but not including £7.	£7 and upwards, but not including £8.	£8 and upwards, but not including £9.	£9 and upwards, but not including £10.	£10 and upwards.	TOTAL.
ULSTER.												
Antrim,	23	38	10	7	–	3	–	–	–	–	3	84
Armagh,	1	15	5	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	23
Cavan,	11	39	6	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	56
Donegal,	30	19	3	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	54
Down,	3	24	56	4	5	2	–	1	–	–	–	95
Fermanagh,	9	15	7	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	32
Londonderry,	14	48	1	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	65
Monaghan,	1	25	5	1	–	–	1	–	–	2	4	39
Tyrone,	10	37	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	50
Total,	102	260	96	17	6	6	1	1	–	2	7	498
LEINSTER.												
Carlow,	1	26	6	1	1	1	–	1	–	–	–	37
Dublin,	–	14	16	21	1	4	–	–	1	–	6	63
Kildare,	1	24	9	6	2	8	1	–	1	1	5	58
Kilkenny,	4	73	14	4	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	97
King's,	14	42	4	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	64
Longford,	19	32	6	2	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	60
Louth,	2	32	10	4	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	50
Meath,	4	44	11	18	4	8	1	–	1	–	5	96
Queen's,	4	26	6	5	–	1	–	–	1	–	4	47
Westmeath,	5	39	12	3	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	60
Wexford,	5	87	35	8	–	7	–	–	–	–	1	143
Wicklow,	10	37	5	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	56
Total,	69	476	134	77	10	33	2	1	5	1	23	831

PROVINCE AND COUNTY.	Under £1.	£1 and upwards, but not including £2.	£2 and upwards, but not including £3.	£3 and upwards, but not including £4.	£4 and upwards, but not including £5.	£5 and upwards, but not including £6.	£6 and upwards, but not including £7.	£7 and upwards, but not including £8.	£8 and upwards, but not including £9.	£9 and upwards, but not including £10.	£10 and upwards.	TOTAL.
CONNAUGHT.												
Galway,	73	38	9	4	1	2	–	–	–	–	–	127
Leitrim,	5	13	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	19
Mayo,	43	13	3	3	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	64
Roscommon,	6	23	10	4	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	45
Sligo,	12	12	6	5	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	37
Total,	139	99	29	16	3	4	2	–	–	–	–	292
MUNSTER.												
Clare,	6	56	13	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	76
Cork,	30	133	69	36	2	6	–	–	–	–	2	278
Kerry,	20	56	3	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	80
Limerick,	8	50	15	21	7	7	–	–	–	–	1	109
Tipperary,	7	96	41	12	2	4	–	–	–	–	–	162
Waterford,	8	32	17	4	5	–	–	–	–	–	–	61
Total,	74	423	158	74	17	17	–	–	–	–	3	766
SUMMARY.												
ULSTER,	102	260	96	17	6	6	1	1	–	2	7	498
LEINSTER,	69	476	134	77	10	33	2	1	5	1	23	831
CONNAUGHT,	139	99	29	16	3	4	2	–	–	–	–	292
MUNSTER,	74	423	158	74	17	17	–	–	–	–	3	766
TOTAL,	384	1,258	417	184	36	60	5	2	5	3	33	2,387

PROVINCES AND COUNTIES.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.						
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.																Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.							Total No. of Thoroughbreds							
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
ULSTER.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Antrim,	7	10 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	7	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0	14	6	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Armagh,	4	8 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Cavan,	1	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	4 4 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 0 0	4	3	3 10 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 10 0
Donegal,	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2	4	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 15 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 0 0
Down,	7	10 0 0	3 0 0	4 4 0	3 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	11	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	18	13	4 0 0	1 5 0	2 10 0	1 5 0	2 10 0	1 5 0
Fermanagh,	4	3 3 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	5	5	3 0 0	1 2 6	3 0 0	1 2 6	2 2 0	0 15 0
Londonderry,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1	6	10 10 0	1 5 0	5 5 0	1 5 0	5 5 0	1 5 0
Monaghan,	3	10 0 0	3 0 0	10 0 0	3 0 0	10 0 0	3 0 0	6	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	9	2	6 0 0	5 0 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0
Tyrone,	2	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	6	3 3 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
	29	10 0 0	2 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	31	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	60	46	10 10 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	0 15 0
LEINSTER.																						
Carlow,	4	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	5	6 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	1 10 0	9	4	6 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Dublin,	16	21 0 0	3 3 0	21 0 0	3 3 0	21 0 0	2 0 0	2	4 0 0	2 2 0	4 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	18	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0
Kildare,	16	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 0 0	15	63 0 0	1 10 0	63 0 0	1 10 0	6 6 0	1 0 0	31	7	5 5 0	1 10 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	3 3 0	1 10 0
Kilkenny,	5	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	9	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	14	14	8 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
King's,	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	6	10 10 0	2 10 0	10 10 0	2 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	7	7	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
Longford,	6	8 8 0	1 0 0	8 8 0	1 0 0	4 4 0	1 0 0	3	10 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	9	4	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Louth,	4	8 8 0	2 0 0	8 8 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	3	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	7	4	4 4 0	0 10 0	4 4 0	0 10 0	2 2 0	0 10 0
Meath,	22	52 10 0	2 10 0	52 10 0	2 10 0	24 0 0	2 0 0	12	15 15 0	3 0 0	15 15 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	34	7	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0
Queen's,	6	13 13 0	2 2 0	13 13 0	2 2 0	13 13 0	2 2 0	8	10 10 0	2 0 0	10 10 0	2 2 0	10 10 0	2 2 0	14	2	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0
Westmeath,	8	10 0 0	2 0 0	10 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	7	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0	15	4	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	2 2 0	1 0 0
Wexford,	12	25 0 0	2 0 0	25 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	14	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	26	20	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0
Wicklow,	6	9 0 0	1 10 0	8 8 0	1 10 0	4 4 0	1 10 0	6	5 5 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	1 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0	12	6	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
	106	52 10 0	1 0 0	52 10 0	1 0 0	24 0 0	1 0 0	90	63 0 0	1 0 0	63 0 0	1 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	196	82	8 0 0	0 10 0	6 0 0	0 10 0	5 5 0	0 10 0

PROVINCES AND COUNTIES.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
ULSTER.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Antrim,	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	4	1 5 0	0 7 6	14	4 0 0	0 10 0	8	2 5 0	0 7 6	30	3 3 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 15 0	3	1 10 0	0 10 0	84
Armagh,	-	—	—	-	—	—	13	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	23
Cavan,	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	0 12 0	22	2 0 0	0 10 0	6	3 0 0	0 15 0	18	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	56
Donegal,	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	8	2 2 0	0 12 0	10	1 0 0	0 12 0	6	5 0 0	1 0 0	18	2 0 0	0 6 6	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	54
Down,	3	2 5 0	2 0 0	5	2 10 0	1 0 0	29	2 10 0	1 0 0	18	2 10 0	1 0 0	9	3 0 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	95
Fermanagh,	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	-	—	—	9	3 0 0	0 15 0	3	2 10 0	0 17 6	9	2 7 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	32
Londonderry,	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	13	3 5 0	0 12 6	13	4 0 0	1 0 0	28	2 10 0	0 12 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	65
Monaghan,	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	5	2 0 0	1 0 0	6	2 0 0	0 15 0	5	5 0 0	1 0 0	11	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	39
Tyrone,	2	2 10 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	19	2 10 0	0 10 0	7	3 0 0	1 0 0	12	2 10 0	0 8 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	50
	15	5 5 0	1 0 0	28	2 10 0	0 7 6	135	4 0 0	0 10 0	67	5 0 0	0 7 6	139	3 3 0	0 6 6	-	—	—	4	1 10 0	0 10 0	4	1 10 0	0 10 0	498
LEINSTER.																									
Carlow,	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 10 0	1 0 0	15	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	0 10 6	37
Dublin,	5	10 10 0	3 0 0	4	3 3 0	2 0 0	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	19	5 5 0	1 5 0	10	3 5 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	63
Kildare,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	7	2 2 0	1 0 0	11	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	58
Kilkenny,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	23	4 5 0	1 0 0	11	3 0 0	1 0 0	33	2 5 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 12 0	0 8 0	97
King's,	1	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	19	3 0 0	0 2 6	5	1 10 0	1 0 0	16	2 0 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	1 0 0	0 5 0	64
Longford,	-	—	—	-	—	—	26	2 0 0	0 15 0	3	2 0 0	1 10 0	16	3 0 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 4 0	60
Louth,	-	—	—	3	8 0 0	1 0 0	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	19	2 2 0	0 15 0	10	2 2 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	50
Meath,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	9	2 0 0	1 0 0	34	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	3	2 2 0	0 15 0	96
Queen's,	-	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	9	3 0 0	0 7 6	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	17	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 10 0	47
Westmeath,	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	13	3 10 0	1 0 0	4	3 10 0	1 0 0	20	2 10 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 10 0	60
Wexford,	1	5 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	46	5 0 0	1 0 0	5	3 5 0	1 0 0	36	3 3 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	2 2 0	0 17 6	143
Wicklow,	-	—	—	-	—	—	12	2 10 0	1 0 0	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	13	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	0 10 0	9	2 2 0	0 10 0	56
	11	10 10 0	1 0 0	9	8 0 0	1 0 0	170	5 0 0	0 2 6	88	6 5 0	0 15 0	231	3 5 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	4	5 0 0	0 10 0	40	2 2 0	0 4 0	831

PROVINCES AND COUNTIES.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
CONNAUGHT.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Galway,	13	6 0 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3	6 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	16	4	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
Leitrim,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Mayo,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	4	2	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
Roscommon,	5	4 4 0	2 10 0	4 4 0	2 10 0	4 4 0	2 10 0	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	8	12	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Sligo,	6	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4	4 0 0	1 10 0	4 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	10	9	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0
	25	6 0 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	13	6 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	38	28	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0
MUNSTER.																						
Clare,	5	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	9	6	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	0 10 0
Cork,	26	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	40	10 10 0	1 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	66	35	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
Kerry,	3	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	6	4	5 5 0	1 2 6	3 3 0	1 2 6	2 0 0	1 2 6
Limerick,	16	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	17	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	33	22	8 8 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	4 0 0	1 10 0
Tipperary,	14	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	25	6 6 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	39	35	7 7 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	0 15 0
Waterford,	8	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	11	12 12 0	2 0 0	6 6 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	19	6	3 0 0	1 5 0	3 0 0	1 5 0	1 10 0	1 5 0
	72	10 10 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	100	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	172	108	8 8 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0
SUMMARY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
ULSTER,	29	10 0 0	2 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	31	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	60	46	10 10 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	0 15 0
LEINSTER,	106	52 10 0	1 0 0	52 10 0	1 0 0	24 0 0	1 0 0	90	63 0 0	1 0 0	63 0 0	1 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	196	82	8 0 0	0 10 0	6 0 0	0 10 0	5 5 0	0 10 0
CONNAUGHT,	25	6 6 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	13	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	38	28	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0
MUNSTER,	72	10 10 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	100	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	172	108	8 8 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0
	232	52 10 0	1 0 0	52 10 0	1 0 0	24 0 0	1 0 0	234	63 0 0	1 0 0	63 0 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	466	264	10 10 0	0 10 0	6 0 0	0 10 0	6 0 0	0 10 0

PROVINCES AND COUNTIES.	HACKNEYS. Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			HACKNEYS. Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.			Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT. Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			DRAUGHT. Half-bred.			Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	
CONNAUGHT.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Galway,	2	4 15 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	32	2 10 0	0 5 0	1	2 2 0	1 10 0	53	7 0 0	0 2 6	2	0 12 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	17	0 12 0	0 2 6	127
Leitrim,	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	2 0 0	0 15 0	2	5 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 5 0	19
Mayo,	1	3 3 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	23	3 0 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	20	1 2 6	0 5 0	3	0 16 0	0 2 6	1	3 0 0	1 0 0	10	1 0 0	0 3 0	64
Roscommon,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	2 5 0	1 0 0	2	2 5 0	1 0 0	16	2 0 0	0 12 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 0 0	45
Sligo,	-	—	—	-	—	—	16	2 5 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	2	0 7 6	0 6 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	37
	3	4 15 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	86	3 0 0	0 5 0	5	5 0 0	1 0 0	95	7 0 0	0 2 6	5	0 16 0	0 2 6	1	3 0 0	1 0 0	31	1 10 0	0 2 6	292
MUNSTER.																									
Clare,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	44	2 10 0	0 18 0	2	1 10 0	1 10 0	13	2 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	76
Cork,	-	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	77	4 0 0	0 10 0	18	3 0 0	1 0 0	72	3 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	2 2 0	0 10 0	278
Kerry,	-	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 15 0	16	3 0 0	0 12 6	3	2 15 0	1 2 6	40	2 10 0	0 10 0	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	5	1 0 0	0 10 0	80
Limerick,	-	—	—	-	—	—	38	4 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	11	3 3 0	0 5 0	2	0 7 6	0 7 6	-	—	—	3	0 15 0	0 5 0	109
Tipperary	-	—	—	-	—	—	59	5 0 0	0 7 6	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	22	4 0 0	0 7 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 7 6	162
Waterford,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	21	4 0 0	1 0 0	2	3 0 0	1 10 0	5	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 7 6	61
	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	4	1 10 0	0 15 0	260	5 0 0	0 7 6	28	3 0 0	1 0 0	163	4 0 0	0 5 0	6	1 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	23	2 2 0	0 5 0	766
SUMMARY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
ULSTER,	15	5 5 0	1 0 0	28	2 10 0	0 7 6	135	4 0 0	0 10 0	67	5 0 0	0 7 6	139	3 3 0	0 6 6	-	—	—	4	1 10 0	0 10 0	4	1 10 0	0 10 0	498
LEINSTER,	11	10 10 0	1 0 0	9	8 0 0	1 0 0	170	5 0 0	0 2 6	88	5 5 0	0 15 0	231	3 5 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	4	5 0 0	0 10 0	40	2 2 0	0 4 0	831
CONNAUGHT,	3	4 15 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	86	3 0 0	0 5 0	5	5 0 0	1 0 0	95	7 0 0	0 2 6	5	0 16 0	0 2 6	1	3 0 0	1 0 0	31	1 10 0	0 2 6	292
MUNSTER,	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	4	1 10 0	0 15 0	260	5 0 0	0 7 6	28	3 0 0	1 0 0	163	4 0 0	0 5 0	6	1 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	23	2 2 0	0 5 0	766
	31	10 10 0	1 0 0	41	8 0 0	0 7 6	651	5 0 0	0 2 6	188	5 5 0	0 7 6	628	7 0 0	0 2 6	11	1 10 0	0 2 6	9	5 0 0	0 10 0	98	2 2 0	0 2 6	2,387

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.							
	Thoroughbreds entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.															Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.																
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.				Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.				Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		
ANTRIM.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
Antrim,	1	10 0 0	10 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Ballymena,	6	8 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	6	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0		12	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	
Ballymoney,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Larne and Carrickfergus,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6 6 0	6 6 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0		1	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Lisburn,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
BELFAST:																								
East District,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
North District,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
North-West District,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
West District,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	
South District,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	7	10 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	7	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0	21 0 0	1 10 0		14	6	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	
ARMAGH.																								
Armagh,	2	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		2	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Lurgan,	1	6 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Newry,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Portadown,	1	8 8 0	8 8 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	4	8 8 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		4	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
CAVAN.																								
Bailieboro',	1	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0		2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Cavan,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4 4 0	4 4 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0		1	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Killeshandra,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Swanlinbar,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 0 0	1 0 0		1	1	3 10 0	3 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Virginia,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	
	1	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	4 4 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 0 0		4	3	3 10 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
ANTRIM.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Antrim,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
Ballymena,	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 5 0	0 10 0	3	2 5 0	1 0 0	4	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	31
Ballymoney,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 17 6	0 17 6	2	2 0 0	0 7 6	11	2 0 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	16
Larne and Carrickfergus	-	—	—	3	1 5 0	0 7 6	5	2 0 0	0 12 6	2	2 2 0	1 0 0	10	3 3 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	25
Lisburn,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	4 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
BELFAST: East District,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	2	2 10 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
North District,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2
North-West District,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-
West District,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1
South District,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-
	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	4	1 5 0	0 7 6	14	4 0 0	0 10 0	8	2 5 0	0 7 6	30	3 3 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 15 0	3	1 10 0	0 10 0	84
ARMAGH.																									
Armagh,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5
Lurgan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4
Newry,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	4	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Portadown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4
	-	—	—	-	—	—	13	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	23
CAVAN.																									
Bailieboro',	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	2 0 0	0 15 0	3	3 0 0	1 5 0	5	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
Cavan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Killeshandra,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	1 0 0	0 10 0	1	1 10 0	0 15 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Swanlinbar,	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	0 12 0	4	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Virginia,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	1 5 0	8	1 0 0	0 12 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	15
	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	0 12 0	22	2 0 0	0 10 0	6	3 0 0	0 15 0	18	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	56

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	Thoroughbreds entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
DONEGAL.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Ardara,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ballyshannon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 15 0	1 15 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Buncrana,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dunfanaghy,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dungloe,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Letterkenny,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Moville,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Raphoe,	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0
Rathmullen,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2	4	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 15 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 0 0
DOWN.																						
Banbridge,	1	10 0 0	10 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0
Downpatrick,	2	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	6	7 7 0	2 2 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	8	3	4 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0
Newtownards,	3	8 0 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	3 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	4	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	7	7	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Rathfriland,	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2	2	1 10 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0
	7	10 0 0	3 0 0	4 4 0	3 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	11	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	18	13	4 0 0	1 5 0	2 10 0	1 5 0	2 10 0	1 5 0
FERMANAGH.																						
Derrygonnelly,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	0 15 0
Enniskillen,	2	2 10 0	2 2 0	2 10 0	2 2 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3	2 2 0	1 2 6	2 2 0	1 2 6	2 2 0	0 15 0
Kesh,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lisnaskea,	2	3 3 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	4	3 3 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	5	5	3 0 0	1 2 6	3 0 0	1 2 6	2 2 0	0 15 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
DONEGAL.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ardara,	-	—	—	1	—	—	4	0 17 6	0 12 6	-	—	—	1	0 12 0	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Ballyshannon,	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5
Buncrana,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	5	0 17 6	0 12 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Dunfanaghy,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	5 0 0	1 0 0	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	4
Dungloe,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1
Letterkenny,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	1	5 0 0	2 5 0	4	0 12 0	0 6 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Moville,	-	—	—	3	2 2 0	0 12 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5
Raphoe,	1	3 3 0	2 2 0	2	1 0 0	0 15 0	2	1 5 0	1 0 0	1	2 2 0	1 5 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
Rathmullen,	1	2 10 0	1 10 0	2	1 5 0	0 15 0	1	0 12 0	0 12 0	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	4	1 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	10
	3	3 3 0	1 0 0	8	2 2 0	0 12 0	10	1 0 0	0 12 0	6	5 0 0	1 0 0	18	2 0 0	0 6 6	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	54
DOWN.																									
Banbridge,	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	2 10 0	2 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	3	2 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
Downpatrick,	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	19	2 10 0	2 0 0	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	35
Newtownards,	1	2 5 0	2 5 0	3	2 10 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	13	2 10 0	1 15 0	2	3 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	33
Rathfriland,	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	7	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 15 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	16
	3	2 5 0	2 0 0	5	2 10 0	1 0 0	29	2 10 0	1 0 0	18	2 10 0	1 0 0	9	3 0 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	95
FERMANAGH.																									
Derrygonnelly,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	0 12 6	0 12 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Enniskillen,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	0 15 0	1	0 17 6	0 17 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	9
Kesh,	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 5 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2
Lisnaskea,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 15 0	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	8	2 7 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	-	—	—	9	3 0 0	0 15 0	3	2 10 0	0 17 6	9	2 7 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	32

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	Thoroughbreds entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
LONDONDERRY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Coleraine,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Limavady,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Londonderry,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	10 10 0	10 10 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0
Magherafelt,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1	3	3 7 6	1 5 0	3 7 6	1 5 0	1 5 0	1 5 0
	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1	6	10 10 0	1 5 0	5 5 0	1 5 0	5 5 0	1 5 0
MONAGHAN.																						
Carrickmacross,	1	10 0 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	10 0 0	4	10 10 0	2 7 0	10 10 0	2 7 0	10 10 0	2 7 0	5	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0
Clones,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0
Monaghan,	1	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	2	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	10 0 0	3 0 0	10 0 0	3 0 0	10 0 0	3 0 0	6	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	31 10 0	1 1 0	9	2	6 0 0	5 0 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0
TYRONE.																						
Aughnacloy,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	3 3 0	1 0 0	1 15 0	1 10 0	1 15 0	1 10 0
Cookstown,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dungannon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Newtownstewart,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Omagh,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Strabane,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
	2	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	6	3 3 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
LONDONDERRY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Coleraine,	–	—	—	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	4	3 0 0	1 10 0	4	2 5 0	1 0 0	15	2 0 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	25
Limavady,	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	7	4 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 10 0	0 17 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	13
Londonderry,	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 5 0	3	2 10 0	1 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	6
Magherafelt,	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	–	—	—	9	3 5 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	7	1 3 6	1 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	21
	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	13	3 5 0	0 12 6	13	4 0 0	1 0 0	28	2 10 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	65
MONAGHAN.																									
Carrickmacross,	–	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 12 6	1 0 0	10	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	23
Clones,	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	2	5 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	9
Monaghan,	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	2 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	7
	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	5	2 0 0	1 0 0	6	2 0 0	0 15 0	5	5 0 0	1 0 0	11	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	39
TYRONE.																									
Aughnacloy,	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	12
Cookstown,	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	2 0 0	0 15 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 10 0	1 2 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	7
Dungannon,	1	2 10 0	1 10 0	–	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	6
Newtownstewart,	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	2	0 12 6	0 8 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	6
Omagh,	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	6	2 10 0	0 17 0	2	3 0 0	1 2 6	5	2 5 0	0 17 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	17
Strabane,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	2
	2	2 10 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	19	2 10 0	0 10 0	7	3 0 0	1 0 0	12	2 10 0	0 8 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	50

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.							
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.																Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.								Other Thoroughbreds.															
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.				Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
CARLOW.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.				£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bagnalstown,	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	2 0 0		2	6 0 0	3 3 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0		4	2	6 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Carlow,	2	5 5 0	3 3 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	5 5 0	1 10 0		3	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0		5	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
	4	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	1 10 0		5	6 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	1 10 0		9	4	6 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
DUBLIN.																								
Balbriggan,	8	15 15 0	3 3 0	15 15 0	3 3 0	15 15 0	2 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—		8	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Clontarf,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dundrum,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lucan,	5	21 0 0	5 0 0	21 0 0	5 0 0	21 0 0	5 0 0		1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0		6	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dublin Metropolitan Police District.	3	10 10 0	5 5 0	10 10 0	5 5 0	4 4 0	3 3 0		1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0		4	2	5 5 0	2 2 0	5 5 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0
	16	21 0 0	3 3 0	21 0 0	3 3 0	21 0 0	2 0 0		2	4 0 0	2 2 0	4 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0		18	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0
KILDARE.																								
Athy,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0		1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0		2	3	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Kildare,	8	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 3 0		5	63 0 0	2 0 0	63 0 0	2 0 0	6 6 0	2 0 0		13	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0
Naas,	7	13 13 0	4 4 0	13 13 0	4 4 0	13 13 0	3 3 0		3	5 5 0	2 10 0	5 5 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 0 0		10	1	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0
Robertstown,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		6	3 3 0	1 10 0	3 3 0	1 10 0	3 3 0	1 0 0		6	2	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0
	16	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 0 0	18 18 0	3 0 0		15	63 0 0	1 10 0	63 0 0	1 10 0	6 6 0	1 0 0		31	7	5 5 0	1 10 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	3 3 0	1 10 0

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
CARLOW.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Bagnalstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	12	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	24
Carlow,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 10 0	1	2 10 0	1 0 0	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 6	0 10 6	13
	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 10 0	1 0 0	15	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	0 10 6	37
DUBLIN.																									
Balbriggan,	-	—	—	2	3 3 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 10 0	1 10 0	4	3 3 0	1 1 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	18
Clontarf,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	3 3 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	10
Dundrum,	5	10 10 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
Lucan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 10 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Dublin Metropolitan Police District.	-	—	—	2	2 2 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	5 5 0	1 5 0	2	3 3 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	14
	5	10 10 0	3 0 0	4	3 3 0	2 0 0	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	19	5 5 0	1 5 0	10	3 5 0	1 0 0		—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	63
KILDARE.																									
Athy,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	6	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	12
Kildare,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	16
Naas,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	2	2 2 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	17
Robertstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 2 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	13
	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	7	2 2 0	1 0 0	11	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	58

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.							
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.																Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.								Other Thoroughbreds.															
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemen's Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemen's Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemen's Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
KILKENNY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Callan,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0		2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	5	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Castlecomer,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Johnstown,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kilkenny,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0		1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pilltown,	3	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0		5	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	8	6	8 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Thomastown,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	3	5 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 0 0
	5	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0		9	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	14	14	8 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
KING'S.																							
Banagher,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Edenderry,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Parsonstown.	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
Shinrone,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		5	10 10 0	2 10 0	10 10 0	2 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	5	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Tullamore,	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0		1	5 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0		6	10 10 0	2 10 0	10 10 0	2 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	7	7	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
LONGFORD.																							
Ballymahon,	1	8 8 0	8 8 0	8 8 0	8 8 0	4 4 0	4 4 0		1	10 0 0	10 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Granard,	4	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0		1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	5	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Longford,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0		1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	2	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
	6	8 8 0	1 0 0	8 8 0	1 0 0	4 4 0	1 0 0		3	10 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	9	4	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
KILKENNY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Callan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
Castlecomer,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	14	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	18
Johnstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	5	1 10 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	8
Kilkenny,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	2 2 0	1 0 0	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 12 0	0 8 0	11
Pilltown,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	22
Thomastown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	12	4 5 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	2 5 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	23	4 5 0	1 0 0	11	3 0 0	1 0 0	33	2 5 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 12 0	0 8 0	97
KING'S.																									
Banagher,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	4	2 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 5 0	15
Edenderry,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 15 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	8	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	13
Parsonstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	—	—	7
Shinrone,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 10 0	10
Tullamore,	1	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	8	2 0 0	0 2 6	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 12 6	0 10 0	19
	1	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	19	3 0 0	0 2 6	5	1 10 0	1 0 0	16	2 0 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	1 0 0	0 5 0	64
LONGFORD.																									
Ballymahon,	-	—	—	-	—	—	10	2 0 0	0 15 0	1	1 10 0	1 1 0	6	1 15 0	0 14 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	20
Granard,	-	—	—	-	—	—	10	2 0 0	0 15 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	4	3 0 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 4 0	24
Longford,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	6	1 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	16
	-	—	—	-	—	—	26	2 0 0	0 15 0	3	2 0 0	1 10 0	16	3 0 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 4 0	60

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.						
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.																Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.							Total No. of Thoroughbreds.							
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
LOUTH.																						
Ardee,	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Collon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0
Drogheda,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	1	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0
Dundalk,	3	8 8 0	2 0 0	8 8 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	2	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	1 0 0	5	2	4 4 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	2 2 0	2 0 0
	4	8 8 0	2 0 0	8 8 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	3	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	7	4	4 4 0	0 10 0	4 4 0	0 10 0	2 2 0	0 10 0
MEATH.																						
Athboy,	5	40 0 0	3 0 0	40 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1	15 15 0	15 15 0	15 15 0	15 15 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	6	2	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0
Dunshaughlin,	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Kells,	4	6 6 0	4 0 0	6 6 0	3 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0
Navan,	7	24 0 0	3 0 0	24 0 0	3 0 0	24 0 0	3 0 0	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	8	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slane,	3	52 10 0	3 0 0	52 10 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	4	10 10 0	3 0 0	10 10 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	7	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trim,	2	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	5	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	7	3	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0	5 5 0	3 0 0
	22	52 10 0	2 10 0	52 10 0	2 10 0	24 0 0	2 0 0	12	15 15 0	3 0 0	15 15 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	34	7	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0
QUEEN'S.																						
Abbeyleix,	3	8 8 0	2 2 0	8 8 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	3	10 10 0	3 3 0	10 10 0	3 3 0	10 10 0	3 3 0	6	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Ballylinan	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Maryborough,	3	13 13 0	10 10 0	13 13 0	10 10 0	13 13 0	10 10 0	3	10 0 0	5 0 0	10 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	6	1	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0
Mountrath,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	6	13 13 0	2 2 0	13 13 0	2 2 0	13 13 0	2 2 0	8	10 10 0	2 2 0	10 10 0	2 2 0	10 10 0	2 2 0	14	2	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
LOUTH.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ardee,	-	—	—	1	8 0 0	2 5 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	9	1 15 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	12
Collon,	-	—	—	-	—	—		—	—	1	2 0 0	1 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
Drogheda,	-	—	—	-	—	—		—	—	3	2 2 0	1 10 0	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	8
Dundalk,	-	—	—	2	2 2 0	1 0 0	6	1 10 0	1 0 0	6	2 2 0	1 10 0	6	2 2 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	27
	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	19	2 2 0	0 15 0	10	2 2 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	50
MEATH.																									
Athboy,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	2 2 0	1 1 0	6	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
Dunshaughlin,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Kells,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	13	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	21
Navan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	1 5 0	4	2 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	17
Slane,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	13
Trim,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	5	1 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	20
	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	9	2 0 0	1 0 0	34	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	3	2 2 0	0 15 0	96
QUEEN'S.																									
Abbeyleix,	-	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	1 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	13
Ballylinan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	3
Maryborough,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	9	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	20
Mountrath,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	3 0 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
	-	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	9	3 0 0	0 7 6	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	17	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 10 0	47

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.							
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.															Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.								Other Thoroughbreds.															
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
WESTMEATH.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Ballynacargy,	2	6 0 0	3 3 0	6 0 0	3 3 0	6 0 0	3 3 0		1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	3	2	5 0 0	4 4 0	5 0 0	4 4 0	2 2 0	2 2 0
Castlepollard,	2	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0		1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Delvin,	2	10 0 0	2 0 0	10 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kilbeggan,	1	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	9 9 0	5 5 0	5 5 0		2	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	1 5 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Moate,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0		1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Mullingar,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		2	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	8	10 0 0	2 0 0	10 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0		7	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0	15	4	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	2 2 0	1 0 0
WEXFORD.																							
Enniscorthy,	4	25 0 0	5 0 0	25 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0		3	3 3 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	1 0 0	7	5	3 5 0	2 0 0	3 5 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Gorey,	3	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0		4	5 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	7	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
New Ross,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	1	3	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 10 0
Taghmon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		4	10 0 0	1 10 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	1 1 0	4	6	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Wexford,	5	7 0 0	2 0 0	7 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0		2	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	7	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
	12	25 0 0	2 0 0	25 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0		14	10 0 0	1 0 0	10 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	26	20	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0
WICKLOW.																							
Arklow,	2	9 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0		3	5 5 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	5	6	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Bray,	3	5 5 0	1 10 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	3 3 0	1 10 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dunlavin,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wicklow	1	8 8 0	8 8 0	8 8 0	8 8 0	4 4 0	4 4 0		2	3 3 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	6	9 0 0	1 10 0	8 8 0	1 10 0	4 4 0	1 10 0		6	5 5 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	1 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0	12	6	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
WESTMEATH.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ballynacargy, . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	3 10 0	1 0 0	1	3 10 0	1 0 0	2	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	13
Castlepollard, . .	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	6	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 10 0	13
Delvin, ...	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 10 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
Kilbeggan, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 5 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	9
Moate, ...	1	3 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	8
Mullingar, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	6
	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	13	3 10 0	1 0 0	4	3 10 0	1 0 0	20	2 10 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 10 0	60
WEXFORD.																									
Enniscorthy, . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	10	3 3 0	1 0 0	1	3 5 0	2 5 0	5	3 3 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 2 0	1 0 0	31
Gorey, ...	1	5 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	10	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	28
New Ross, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	5 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	12	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	25
Taghmon, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	11	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	12	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	35
Wexford, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 17 6	0 17 6	24
	1	5 0 0	2 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	46	5 0 0	1 0 0	5	3 5 0	1 0 0	36	3 3 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	2 2 0	0 17 6	143
WICKLOW.																									
Arklow, ...	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 3 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	21
Bray, ...	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 2 0	1 2 0	10
Dunlavin, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	1 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 15 0	12
Wicklow, . . .	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	1 0 0	0 10 0	13
	-	—	—	-	—	—	12	2 10 0	1 0 0	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	13	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	0 10 0	9	2 2 0	0 10 0	56

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	THOROUGHBREDS.																HUNTER BREDS.							
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.																Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.								Other Thoroughbreds.								Total No. of Thoroughbreds.							
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	
GALWAY.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
WEST RIDING.																								
Clifden,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Clonbur,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Dunmore,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Gort,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	6 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Oughterard,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Roundstone,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Spiddal,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Tuam,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Galway Town,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
EAST RIDING.																								
Athenry,	3	2 15 0	1 10 0	2 15 0	1 10 0	2 15 0	1 10 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	
Ballinasloe,	2	5 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Loughrea,	4	6 0 0	2 5 0	6 0 0	2 5 0	3 0 0	2 5 0		1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	5	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Moylough,	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	
Portumna,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Woodford,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	13	6 0 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	5 0 0	1 0 0		3	6 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	16	4	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	
LEITRIM.																								
Ballinamore,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Carrick-on-Shannon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Dromahaire,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Manorhamilton,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Mohill,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
	-	—	—	—	—	—	—		-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS. Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			HACKNEYS. Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.			Half-brod of any Breed.			DRAUGHT. Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			DRAUGHT. Half-bred.			Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	
GALWAY.																									
WEST RIDING.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Clifden,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	5 0 0	0 2 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	0 5 0	0 5 0	11
Clonbur,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	7 0 0	5 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
Dunmore,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	2 0 0	0 2 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Gort,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	6	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 7 6	0 7 6	9
Oughterard,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 5 0	0 5 0	3
Roundstone,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	0 5 0	0 5 0	6
Spiddal,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	0 8 0	0 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	0 7 6	0 5 0	6
Tuam,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	8	1 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	12
Galway Town,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	8 0 0	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4
EAST RIDING.																									
Athenry,	2	4 15 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	6	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	5	1 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	18
Ballinasloe,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 5 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Loughrea,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	9	1 10 0	0 7 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	18
Moylough,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	0 10 0	1	2 2 0	1 10 0	3	1 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 2 6	0 2 6	11
Portumna,	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	2 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	0 14 0	0 14 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Woodford,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	2	0 12 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	1	0 12 0	0 12 0	7
	2	4 15 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	32	2 10 0	0 5 0	1	2 2 0	1 10 0	53	7 0 0	0 2 6	2	0 12 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	17	0 12 0	0 2 6	127
LEITRIM.																									
Ballinamore,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-
Carrick-on-Shannon,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	3
Dromahaire,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 5 0	0 5 0	3
Manorhamilton,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	1	5 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 15 0	4
Mohill,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	1 10 0	0 15 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	9
	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	2 0 0	0 15 0	2	5 0 0	1 0 0	4	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 5 0	19

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
MAYO.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Ballaghaderreen,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ballina,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	5 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ballinrobe,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Belmullet,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castlebar,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Claremorris,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0
Newport,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Swinford,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Westport,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	4	2	6 0 0	2 10 0	6 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
ROSCOMMON.																						
Athlone,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Boyle,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	1	3	6 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Castlerea,	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	1 5 0
Roscommon,	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Strokestown,	1	4 4 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	2	5 5 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 2 0	2 0 0	3	3	5 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
	5	4 4 0	2 10 0	4 4 0	2 10 0	4 4 0	2 10 0	3	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	8	12	6 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
SLIGO.																						
Ballymote,	2	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0
Collooney,	2	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	1	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Easkey,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	6	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	0 10 0
Sligo,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0
Tubbercurry,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
	6	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4	4 0 0	1 10 0	4 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	10	9	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	0 10 0

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.											
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
MAYO.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ballaghaderreen,	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 8 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	3
Ballina,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	2 0 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	6	1 0 0	0 8 0	–	—	—	1	3 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 0 0	0 6 0	14
Ballinrobe,	1	3 3 0	2 0 0	–	—	—	7	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	2	1 2 6	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	6
Belmullet,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 7 6	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	2
Castlebar,	–	—	—	–	—	—	6	2 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5	0 7 6	0 4 0	11
Claremorris,	–	—	—	–	—	—	6	3 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	10
Newport,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	0 3 0	0 2 6	–	—	—	1	0 3 0	0 3 0	4
Swinford,	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 7 0	–	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 6 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	4
Westport,	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	1 2 6	0 5 0	–	—	—	4	0 5 0	0 5 0	1	0 16 0	0 5 0	–	—	—	2	0 3 0	0 3 0	10
	1	3 3 0	2 0 0	–	—	—	23	3 0 0	0 5 0	–	—	—	20	1 2 6	0 5 0	3	0 16 0	0 2 6	1	3 0 0	1 0 0	10	1 0 0	0 3 0	64
ROSCOMMON.																									
Athlone,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	2 5 0	1 0 0	2	2 5 0	1 0 0	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	13
Boyle,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	2 5 0	1 10 0	–	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	7
Castlerea,	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 12 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	8
Roscommon,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	9
Strokestown,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	8
	–	—	—	–	—	—	6	2 5 0	1 0 0	2	2 5 0	1 0 0	16	2 0 0	0 12 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	45
SLIGO.																									
Ballymote,	–	—	—	–	—	—	5	2 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	9
Collooney,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	2 5 0	0 7 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	6
Easkey,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	10
Sligo,	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	2 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	7
Tubbercurry,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	0 11 0	0 11 0	–	—	—	2	0 7 6	0 6 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5
	–	—	—	–	—	—	16	2 5 0	0 7 6	–	—	—	2	0 7 6	0 6 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	37

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.							
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.							
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.															
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	
CLARE.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ballyvaughan,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Corofin,	3	4 0 0	2 2 0	4 0 0	2 2 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Ennis,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Ennistymon,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Kildysart,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Killaloe,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Kilrush,	1	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Sixmilebridge,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	
Tulla,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	3	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	
	5	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	4	4 0 0	1 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	9	6	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	
CORK.																							
EAST RIDING.																							
Ballincollig,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	3 0 0	1 2 6	3 0 0	1 2 6	3 0 0	1 2 6	3	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	
Charleville,	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	9	6 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	11	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	
Fermoy,	4	3 3 0	2 10 0	3 3 0	2 10 0	3 3 0	2 10 0	1	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	5	3	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	
Kanturk,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	2	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Kinsale,	3	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	1 15 0	1 0 0	
Mallow,	4	8 0 0	3 0 0	8 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	6	7 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	10	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	
Midleton,	2	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5	5 5 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 3 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	7	2	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	
Mitchelstown,	2	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	5	7 7 0	3 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	7	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Newmarket,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	2 0 0	1 2 6	2 0 0	1 2 6	2 0 0	1 2 6	
Queenstown,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	
Youghal,	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	5 0 0	2	5 0 0	2 10 0	5 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	6	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	
Cork, North,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Cork, South,	2	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	5	10 10 0	1 5 0	10 10 0	1 5 0	5 0 0	1 5 0	7	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District,	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
CLARE.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Ballyvaughan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2
Corofin,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	1	1 5 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5
Ennis,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	0 7 6	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	6
Ennistymon,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	5	2 0 0	0 18 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Kildysart,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	4	1 0 0	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	9
Killaloe,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Kilrush,	-	—	—	-	—	—	14	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	0 12 6	0 12 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	17
Sixmilebridge,	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	2 0 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Tulla,	-	—	—	-	—	—	8	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	13
	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	44	2 10 0	0 18 0	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	13	2 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	76
CORK.																									
East Riding.																									
Ballincollig,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	11	1 15 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	17
Charleville,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 2 6	1	3 0 0	2 0 0	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
Fermoy,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 2 6	2 2 6	8	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	24
Kanturk,	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	3 3 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
Kinsale,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	0 10 0	15
Mallow,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 15 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	16
Midleton,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	6	2 2 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	21
Mitchelstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	4 0 0	1 10 0	1	1 5 0	1 5 0	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	18
Newmarket,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Queenstown,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 10 0	1	1 16 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4
Youghal,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	1	2 2 6	2 2 6	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	19
Cork, North,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	2
Cork, South,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	5	3 0 0	1 10 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 2 0	1 5 0	15

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	Thoroughbreds entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
CORK—*continued.*																						
West Riding.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bandon,	1	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	4	2 2 0	1 5 0	2 2 0	1 5 0	1 10 0	1 5 0
Bantry,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castletown,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Clonakilty,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1	2	2 10 0	2 0 0	2 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	1 5 0
Dunmanway,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Macroom,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3 3 0	2 2 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Millstreet,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0
Skibbereen,	3	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3	1 5 0	1 0 0	1 5 0	1 0 0	1 5 0	1 0 0
Skull,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
	26	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	10 0 0	1 5 0	40	10 10 0	1 0 0	10 10 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	66	35	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0
KERRY.																						
Caherciveen,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Castleisland,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6	1 2 6
Dingle,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kenmare,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Killarney,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	1	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Killorglt	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2	1	5 5 0	5 5 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Listowe,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	1	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Tralee,	2	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	3	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	3	3 0 0	2 2 0	3 0 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1 10 0	6	4	5 5 0	1 2 6	3 3 0	1 2 6	2 0 0	1 2 6

COUNTIES, AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any Breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		No.	Fee.		
		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	
CORK—*continued.*																									
WEST RIDING.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Bandon,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	9	2 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 10 0	19
Bantry,	–	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	0 10 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5
Castletown,	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5	0 15 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5
Clonakilty,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 10 0	12
Dunmanway,	–	—	—	–	—	—	7	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	8
Macroom,	–	—	—	–	—	—	5	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	9
Millstreet,	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	4	3 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	0 11 0	0 11 0	8
Skibbereen,	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 12 0	1	2 10 0	1 5 0	6	1 0 0	0 12 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	15
Skull,	–	—	—	–	—	—	6	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	7
	–	—	—	1	1 2 6	1 2 6	77	4 0 0	0 10 0	18	3 0 0	1 0 0	72	3 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	9	2 2 0	0 10 0	278
KERRY.																									
Caherciveen,	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	2	1 0 0	0 12 6	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 2 6	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5
Castleisland,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	5	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	10
Dingle,	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	3	1 2 6	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	6
Kenmare,	–	—	—	–	—	—	3	0 17 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	2	0 12 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	5
Killarney,	–	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 10 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	8
Killorglin,	–	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	1	2 15 0	1 12 6	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	1	0 15 0	0 15 0	10
Listowel,	–	—	—	–	—	—	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	8	2 10 0	0 12 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	13
Tralee,	–	—	—	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	2 2 0	1 2 6	17	2 0 0	0 15 0	–	—	—	–	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 10 0	23
	–	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 15 0	16	3 0 0	0 12 6	3	2 15 0	1 2 6	40	2 10 0	0 10 0	3	1 10 0	1 0 0	–	—	—	5	1 0 0	0 10 0	80

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	THOROUGHBREDS ENTERED IN WEATHERBY'S STUD BOOK.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee. Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
LIMERICK.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Abbeyfeale,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Adare,	4	4 4 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	3	10 0 0	1 10 0	10 0 0	1 10 0	10 0 0	1 10 0	7	2	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Bruff,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	31 10 0	1 10 0	31 10 0	1 10 0	31 10 0	1 10 0	6	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Kilfinane,	3	5 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	4 0 0	5 0 0	4 0 0	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	4	4	5 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Limerick,	3	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5	7 0 0	2 0 0	7 0 0	2 0 0	3 3 0	1 0 0	8	3	6 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0
Newcastle,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
New Pallas,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 10 0	1 0 0	3	3	3 10 0	2 10 0	3 10 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
Rathkeale,	5	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	8	8 8 0	1 10 0	4 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
	16	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	17	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	31 10 0	1 0 0	33	22	8 8 0	1 10 0	6 0 0	1 10 0	4 0 0	1 10 0
TIPPERARY. SOUTH RIDING.																						
Cahir,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	6 6 0	2 2 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	3	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0
Carrick-on-Suir,	2	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	4	5 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	6	3	5 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 10 0
Cashel,	2	6 0 0	3 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	6 6 0	2 5 0	3 3 0	2 5 0	2 5 0	2 2 0	4	9	7 7 0	1 0 0	3 10 0	1 0 0	2 10 0	1 0 0
Clonmel,	2	3 3 0	3 0 0	3 3 0	3 0 0	3 3 0	3 0 0	1	6 0 0	6 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	3	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dundrum,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	2	3 0 0	2 10 0	3 0 0	2 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0
Killenaule,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tipperary,	2	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	2	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	5 5 0	4	5	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 3 0	2 0 0

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	HACKNEYS. Registered in the Hackney Stud Book. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	HACKNEYS. Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	Half-bred of any breed. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	DRAUGHT. Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	DRAUGHT. Half-bred. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	Nondescript. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	Arabs or Eastern Horses. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	Ponies. No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
LIMERICK.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Abbeyfeale,	-	—	—	-	—	—	10	2 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Adare,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	4	3 3 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	0 15 0	0 5 0	22
Bruff,	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	8
Kilfinane,	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	2	0 5 0	0 5 0	2	0 7 6	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	13
Limerick,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	4 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
Newcastle,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	4
Newpallas,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	4 0 0	1 5 0	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
Rathkeale,	-	—	—	-	—	—	9	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	2 5 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	24
	-	—	—	-	—	—	38	4 0 0	0 10 0	-	—	—	11	3 3 0	0 5 0	2	0 7 6	0 7 6	-	—	—	3	0 15 0	0 5 0	109
TIPPERARY. SOUTH RIDING.																									
Cahir,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	1 10 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Carrick-on-Suir,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	2 5 0	1 10 0	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 7 6	15
Cashel,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	5 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	22
Clonmel,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 0 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Dundrum,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	1	4 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	7
Killenaule,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	0 7 6	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 2 6	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	6
Tipperary,	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11

Counties, and Royal Irish Constabulary District.	THOROUGHBREDS.															HUNTER BREDS.						
	Thoroughbreds entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.														Total No. of Thoroughbreds.	Horses returned as Thoroughbreds, but which do not appear to be entered in Weatherby's Stud Book.						
	Thoroughbreds Registered by the Royal Dublin Society for the purposes of their Scheme.							Other Thoroughbreds.														
	No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.		No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.			No.	Fee, Thoroughbred Mares.		Fee, Gentlemens' Half-bred Mares.		Fee, Farmers' Half-bred Mares.	
		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.		Highest.	Lowest.	Highest	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.			Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.	Highest.	Lowest.
TIPPERARY—*con.*																						
North Riding.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.			£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Borrisokane,	2	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2	4 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	4	3	2 10 0	1 10 0	2 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	0 15 0
Nenagh,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	4	4 0 0	3 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	5	1	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	4 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Newport,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	-	5	3 0 0	1 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	2 0 0	1 0 0
Roscrea,	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1	5 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	1 10 0	2	1	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	1 10 0
Templemore,	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	2	4 0 0	4 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	4	3	3 5 0	2 0 0	3 5 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 2 6
Thurles,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3	2	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0	3 0 0	1 10 0
	14	6 0 0	2 0 0	6 0 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	25	6 6 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	1 10 0	5 5 0	1 0 0	39	35	7 7 0	1 0 0	5 0 0	1 0 0	3 3 0	0 15 0
WATERFORD.																						
Cappoquin,	4	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	2	12 12 0	5 5 0	6 6 0	3 3 0	3 3 0	2 2 0	6	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dungarvan,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	6 6 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	4	4	3 0 0	1 5 0	3 0 0	1 5 0	1 10 0	1 5 0
Portlaw,	-	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	6 6 0	6 6 0	4 4 0	4 4 0	2 2 0	2 2 0	1	2	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0
Waterford,	4	8 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	3 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	4	6 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	3 0 0	2 0 0	8	-	—	—	—	—	—	—
	8	10 10 0	2 0 0	5 5 0	2 0 0	5 0 0	2 0 0	11	12 12 0	2 0 0	6 6 0	2 0 0	4 4 0	2 0 0	19	6	3 0 0	1 5 0	3 0 0	1 5 0	1 10 0	1 5 0

COUNTIES AND ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY DISTRICT.	HACKNEYS.						Half-bred of any breed.			DRAUGHT.						Nondescript.			Arabs or Eastern Horses.			Ponies.			Total No. of Horses and Ponies in Constabulary District.
	Registered in the Hackney Stud Book.			Which do not appear in the Hackney Stud Book.						Cleveland Bay, Yorkshire Coach Horse, Shire, Clydesdale, and Suffolk Punch.			Half-bred.												
	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	No.	Fee. Highest.	Fee. Lowest.	
TIPPERARY—*con.*																									
NORTH RIDING.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Borrisokane,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	4	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	18
Nenagh,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	4 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
Newport,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	2 0 0	0 15 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	13
Roscrea,	-	—	—	-	—	—	4	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	1 10 0	1 0 0	2	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	10
Templemore,	-	—	—	-	—	—	6	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	15
Thurles,	-	—	—	-	—	—	7	2 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	2	1 10 0	0 7 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	14
	-	—	—	-	—	—	59	5 0 0	0 7 6	3	2 0 0	1 0 0	22	4 0 0	0 7 0	1	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	3	1 0 0	0 7 6	162
WATERFORD.																									
Cappoquin,		—	—	-	—	—	3	3 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	2	1 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	11
Dungarvan,	-	—	—	-	—	—	15	3 0 0	1 0 0	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 10 0	0 10 0	25
Portlaw,	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	5	4 0 0	1 0 0	1	3 0 0	1 10 0	2	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	1	0 7 6	0 7 6	13
Waterford,	-	—	—	-	—	—	3	4 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	1	1 10 0	1 10 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	-	—	—	12
	1	2 0 0	2 0 0	-	—	—	26	4 0 0	1 0 0	2	3 0 0	1 10 0	5	3 0 0	1 0 0	-	—	—	-	—	—	2	0 10 0	0 7 6	61

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